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## PROSE SELECTIONS



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# Prose Selections

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**H. I. M. King George V (born 3rd June, 1865)**

**A PANORAMA OF INDIA \***

**AT GUILDHALL (17TH MAY, 1906)**

The seven months' absence has been to us a happy and interesting experience. Still, we rejoice to be at home again, and are thankful to God that He has spared us to return to our children and to those that are dear to us. It is nearly five years ago that the Princess of Wales and I were entertained by the Lord Mayor and the City of London in this ancient hall on the termination of our memorable tour to our sister nations beyond the seas. We are met here to-day under similar circumstances, and the conclusion of our visit to the great Indian Empire may, I think, be regarded as the completion of the mission originally entrusted to us by the King. It is a great satisfaction to us that we have been privileged to visit nearly every part of the British Empire. In thus accomplishing what has been the ambition of our lives, the Princess and I desire to express our sincere gratitude to the country for having

\* From "The King to His People" by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs. Williams and Norgate, London.

enabled us to make this long voyage in such a fine vessel as the *Renown*. No less warmly do we thank the Government of India for the admirable arrangements for our railway journeys of nearly nine thousand miles, which were made with every possible consideration for our convenience and safety. It may, perhaps, interest you to know that we spent twenty-eight nights in our comfortable train. From the 9th of November, the day of our brilliant reception on landing at Bombay, until the moment of our departure from Karachi on the 19th of March, we were welcomed everywhere with a display of enthusiasm and affection which profoundly touched us, and the memory of which will never fade from our minds. We were still more impressed by the unmistakable proofs of genuine devotion and personal attachment to the King-Emperor. At every place we visited where my dear father had been thirty years ago, the event was spoken of with the keenest interest and pride, not only by those who remember seeing him, but also by the younger generation.

Although we were welcomed everywhere by happy, holiday-making crowds which thronged the gaily-decorated streets, we did not forget the misery and poverty which, alas! existed in certain districts afflicted by famine through which we passed. When at Gwalior, I had the opportunity of inspecting a famine camp, and saw with sad interest, but with satisfaction, the excellent arrangements effectively carried out for mitigating the sufferings of upwards of 6,000 men, women, and children, who were there employed, fed, and cared for.

Our visits to several of the great Feudatory States will always be reckoned among the happiest and most

interesting of our experiences. We were received by the respective rulers and their peoples with the warmest enthusiasm, with all the georgeousness and circumstance of old Indian customs, and by them entertained with magnificent hospitality. I enjoyed social intercourse with many of these great Princes, and I was impressed with their loyalty and personal allegiance to the Crown, their nobility of mind, their chivalrous nature, and the great powers which they possess for doing good. I might mention that in several of these States the Imperial Service troops are an important feature. They are raised, equipped, and maintained by the Princes themselves, to be placed at our disposal in case of war. Though these States supply their own officers, these regiments are under the guidance and inspection of British Officers; and it is to be hoped that this excellent movement may be extended throughout all the Feudatory States.

No one could possibly fail to be struck with the wonderful administration of India. Time did not permit of our leaving the beaten track for the interior of the country, and thereby gaining an insight into the machinery of that most efficient organisation, the Government of a district. But we had opportunities of seeing at the headquarters of the Presidencies and of the different Provinces the general and admirable working of the Civil Service. At the same time, we realised that it is a mere handful of highly-educated British officials, often living a hard and strenuous life, frequently separated from their fellow-countrymen, and subject to the trials and discomforts of the plains, who were working hand-in-hand with representatives of the different races in the administration of enormous areas, in the government of millions of people.

During the month of December, in the neighbourhood of Rawal Pindi, I had the pleasure of staying with Lord Kitchener in his camp of manoeuvres, and witnessed operations on an extended scale between two armies numbering in all over 55,000 men, terminating in a review and march past of the largest force ever brought together in India in time of peace. I was struck with the general fitness and the splendid appearance of the British troops, with the physique and power of endurance of the Native Army, and the dash of its cavalry, while throughout the army I found an earnest desire for increased efficiency and for readiness to take the field. I was specially glad to have this opportunity of being associated with our magnificent army in India under such practical conditions. I am proud to say that during my tour I was able to inspect 143,000 troops.

Having seen several colleges and other educational institutions in different parts of India, I gained some slight idea of the efforts that are being made to place within the reach of all classes a liberal education. Let me take as an example the great Mohammedan college and school at Aligarh, which is supported and controlled by the private enterprise of Mohammedan gentlemen from all parts of India. A residential system similar to that at Oxford and Cambridge has been adopted. At the same time athletics are not neglected, and in all schools and colleges there is much emulation in cricket and football. Undoubtedly, such institutions must materially affect the formation of character in future generations.

If I were asked to name any general impressions which I have formed during this exceptional but all too short experience, they would be that I have learnt

to appreciate the fact that India cannot be regarded as one country. We talk casually of going to India. But the majority of us, perhaps, do not realise that it is a continent with an area equal to the whole of Europe, without Russia, containing a population of 300,000,000 of diverse races, languages, and creeds, and many different grades of civilisation. I was struck with its immense size, its splendour, its numerous races, its varied climate, its snow-capped mountains, its boundless deserts, its mighty rivers, its architectural monuments, and its ancient traditions. I have realised the patience, the simplicity of life, the loyal devotion, and the religious spirit which characterises the Indian peoples. I know also their faith in the absolute justice and integrity of our rule.

I cannot help thinking from all I have heard and seen that the task of governing India will be made the easier if we, on our part, infuse into it a wider element of sympathy. I will venture to predict that to such sympathy there will be an ever-abundant and genuine response. May we not also hope for a still fuller measure of trust and confidence in our earnest desire and efforts to promote the well-being, and to further the best interests, of every class?

In speaking of my impressions, I should like very briefly to record a few of those scenes and incidents which will be to us of lasting value. Would that I were able in any way to picture our arrival in Bombay, amid the greetings and hearty acclamations of its cosmopolitan population, dressed in every conceivable colour, and all beneath the clearest blue of an Eastern sky. Quitting Bombay in tropical heat, my thoughts carry me from there over hundreds of miles, almost as far as from London to Constantinople, to the

rigorous climate of the Khyber pass. The Union Jack, floating over the fortress of Jamrud, reminds us that British protection is guaranteed to the caravans that pass twice a week to and from Afghanistan, throughout this twenty-five miles of neutral territory. At Lundi Kotal, the further entrance of the Pass, five British officers and a regiment of Afridis—that tribe which only a few years ago was fighting against us—now garrison this lonely outpost to our Indian Empire. To the historic stronghold of Ali Musjid came the leading Khans, each bringing offerings of good will in the shape of the pick of their flocks of sheep, and the finest specimens of their honey.

Contrast such wild and semi-civilised scenes with Delhi and Agra, those centres of artistic wealth and of priceless architectural monuments, for the preservation of which, and the great care bestowed upon them, universal thanks are due to the late Viceroy, Lord Curzon. Imagine us next at Gwalior and later on at Benares, making our public entry under conditions impossible in any other part of the world, mounted as we were on elephants, gorgeously caparisoned, and passing amid escorts and troops clothed and equipped in all the picturesqueness of mediaeval pageantry. But, among all these varied and striking impressions, none have stirred our hearts as did the Ridge at Delhi, and the grounds and ruins of the Lucknow Residency. They recalled with vivid reality those glorious heroes and those thrilling deeds which will for ever make sacred the story of the Indian Mutiny. I think you will be interested to know that Colonel Bonham, one of the few survivors of the siege of Lucknow, is present here among us to-day. Although he was wounded three times during the siege, I am glad to say he is

still fit and well, and was good enough to act as our guide when we were at Lucknow in December last.

The New Year saw us in Calcutta, the capital of India, and the second largest city of the British Empire, where our reception was most cordial and sympathetic. Here I had the satisfaction of laying the foundation-stone of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hall, a great and national memorial, the inception of which is chiefly due to Lord Curzon, to be a treasure-house of relics and records of the life and reign of our late beloved Sovereign, whose memory is held in loving veneration by every race throughout the Continent of India. If time permitted, I should like to dwell upon Burma, so different, as it is, from India in the nature of its people and in its social characteristics; to speak of the famous golden pagoda at Rangoon, of the interesting sights at Mandalay, and of three delightful days spent on the great River Irrawaddy. Let us change the scene to Madras and its historic associations, so closely connected with the foundation of our Indian Empire. Let us pass thence through the hot plains of Southern India, journeying northwards through Benares, the metropolis of Hinduism, with its sacred river and famous shrines, until at length we re-enter the region of frost and snows at Quetta, with its outpost at Chaman, another gateway in that wild and mountainous district which constitutes our north-west frontier of India. Leaving Quetta, we retrace our steps through that triumph of engineering skill, the railroad through the Bolan Pass; and, descending from an altitude of 5,500 feet, we pass through the burning plains of Sind and reach Karachi, the rapidly growing port of that province.

And here we bid farewell to the country, where for many months we had found a second home and for whose people we shall preserve a lasting affection. •

But these are mere first impressions. I am fully aware how impossible it is to gain accurate and intimate knowledge of so vast a country by a visit of only four and a half months. Yet I would strongly suggest to those who are interested in the great questions which surround the India of to-day to go there and learn as much as is possible by personal observation on the spot. I cannot but think that every Briton who treads the soil of India is assisting towards a better understanding with the Mother Country, helping to break down prejudice, to dispel misapprehension, and to foster sympathy and brotherhood. Thus he will not only strengthen the old ties, but create new ones, and so, please God, secure a better understanding and a closer union of hearts between the Mother Country and her Indian Empire.

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## George Washington (1732-1799)

### FAREWELL ADDRESS

*To the People of the United States.*

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,

The period for a new election of a Citizen, to administer the executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me,

have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently, with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety; and am persuaded whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value

to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country, for the many honours it has conferred upon me; still more for the stedfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious,—vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging,—in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected.—Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the

auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a People. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The Unity of Government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very Liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal

and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immoveable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the Independence and Liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest.—Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole. The

*North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry.—The *South* in the same intercourse, benefiting by the Agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated;—and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted.—The *East*, in a like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home.—The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity own the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as *one nation*.—Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater

resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations;—and what is of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighbouring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues would stimulate and embitter.—Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of Patriotic desire.—Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so larger a sphere?—Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavour to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterising parties by *Geographical* discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*—*Atlantic* and *Western*; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations: they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head: they have seen, in the negociation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the MISSISSIPPI: they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the UNION by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their Brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable.—No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government.—But, the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are

destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force—to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you speedily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts.—One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions—that experience is the surest standard, by which

to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country—that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you, the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind.—It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissention, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism.—But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism.—

The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise People to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public Administration. It agitates the Community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in Governments of a Monarchical cast, Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of

public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into flame, lest, instead of warming it should consume.

It is important likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country, should inspire caution, in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power; by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern: some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the constitution designates.—But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed.—The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports.—In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens.—The mere Politician, equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them.—A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure; reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge.—In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expence by cultivating peace, but re-

membering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expence, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear.—The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate.—To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations, cultivate peace and harmony with all; Religion and Morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can

it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its Virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular Nations, and passionate attachments for others should be excluded; and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The Nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The Nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the Government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The Government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of Nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite Nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where

no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favourite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent Patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the Public Councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy to be

useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it.—Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other.—Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applauses and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith.—Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard

the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour or caprice?

'T is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed—in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that

present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that 't is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. 'T is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will controul the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompence for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is,

that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe my Proclamation of the 22nd April 1793 is the index to my Plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take and was bound in duty and interest, to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on the occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and

consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error: I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my Country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares labours and dangers.

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## William Paley (1743-1805)

### HAPPINESS

The word happy is a relative term; that is, when we call a man happy, we mean that he is happier than some others with whom we compare him, than the generality of others, or than he himself was in some other situation:—thus, speaking of one who has just compassed the object of a long pursuit, ‘Now,’ we say, ‘he is happy.’ And in a like comparative sense, compared, that is, with the general lot of mankind, we call a man happy who possesses health and competency.

In strictness, any condition may be denominated happy, in which the amount or aggregate of pleasure exceeds that of pain; and the degree of happiness depends upon the quantity of this excess.

And the greatest quantity of it ordinarily attainable in human life is what we mean by happiness, when we inquire or pronounce what human happiness consists in.

In which inquiry I will omit much usual declamation on the dignity and capacity of our nature; the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to the animal part of our constitution; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy of some satisfactions, or the meanness, grossness, and sensuality of others;—because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing but in continuance and intensity; from a just computation of which, confirmed by what we observe of the apparent cheerfulness, tranquillity, and contentment

of men of different tastes, tempers, stations, and pursuits, every question concerning human happiness must receive its decision.

It will be our business to show, if we can—

I. What human happiness does not consist in ;

II. What it does consist in.

I. First, then, happiness does not consist in the pleasures of sense, in whatever profusion or variety they be enjoyed. By the pleasures of sense I mean as well the animal gratifications of eating, drinking, and that by which the species is continued ; as the more refined pleasures of music, painting, architecture, gardening, splendid shows, theatric exhibitions ; and the pleasures, lastly, of active sports,—as of hunting, shooting, fishing, etc. For,—

1. These pleasures continue but a little while at a time. This is true of them all, especially of the grosser sort of them. Laying aside the preparation and the expectation, and computing strictly the actual sensation, we shall be surprised to find how inconsiderable a portion of our time they occupy—how few hours in the four-and-twenty they are able to fill up.

2. These pleasures, by repetition, lose their relish. It is a property of the machine, for which we know no remedy, that the organs by which we perceive pleasure are blunted and benumbed by being frequently exercised in the same way. There is hardly any one who has not found the difference between a gratification when new and when familiar ; or any pleasure which does not become indifferent as it grows habitual.

3. The eagerness for high and intense delights takes away the relish from all others ; and as such

delights fall rarely in our way, the greater part of our time becomes from this cause empty and uneasy.

There is hardly any delusion by which men are ~~greater~~ sufferers in their happiness than by their expecting too much from what is called pleasure; that is, from those intense delights which vulgarly engross the name of pleasure. The very expectation spoils them. When they do come, we are often engaged in taking pains to persuade ourselves how much we are pleased, rather than enjoying any pleasure which springs naturally out of the object. And whenever we depend upon being vastly delighted, we always go home secretly grieved at missing our aim. Likewise, as has been observed just now, when this humour of being prodigiously delighted has once taken hold of the imagination, it hinders us from providing for, or acquiescing in, those gently soothing engagements, the due variety and succession of which are the only things that supply a vein or continued stream of happiness.

What I have been able to observe of that part of mankind whose professed pursuit is pleasure, and who are withheld in the pursuit by no restraints of fortune or scruples of conscience, corresponds sufficiently with this account. I have commonly remarked in such men a restless and inextinguishable passion for variety; a great part of their time to be vacant, and so much of it irksome; and that, with whatever eagerness and expectation they set out, they become by degrees fastidious in their choice of pleasure, languid in the enjoyment, yet miserable under the want of it.

The truth seems to be, that there is a limit at which these pleasures soon arrive, and from which

they ever afterwards decline. They are by necessity of short duration, as the organs cannot hold on their emotions beyond a certain length of time; and if you endeavour to compensate for this imperfection in their nature by the frequency with which you repeat them, you suffer more than you gain; by the fatigue of the faculties and the diminution of sensibility.

We have said nothing in this account of the loss of opportunities, or the decay of faculties; which, whenever they happen, leave the voluptuary destitute and desperate—teased by desires that can never be gratified, and the memory of pleasures which must return no more.

It will also be allowed by those who have experienced it, and perhaps by those alone, that pleasure which is purchased by the incumbrance of our fortune is purchased too dear; the pleasure never compensating for the perpetual irritation of embarrassed circumstances.

These pleasures, after all, have their value; and as the young are always too eager in their pursuit of them, the old are sometimes too remiss; that is, too studious of their ease to be at the pains for them which they really deserve.

Secondly, Neither does happiness consist in an exemption from pain, labour, care, business, suspense, molestation, and 'those evils which are without'; such a state being usually attended not with ease, but with depression of spirits, a tastelessness in all our ideas, imaginary anxieties, and the whole train of hypochondriacal affections.

For which reason the expectations of those who retire from their shops and counting-houses, to enjoy

the remainder of their days in leisure and tranquillity, are seldom answered by the effect; much less of such as, in a fit of chagrin, shut themselves up in cloisters ~~and~~ hermitages, or quit the world and their stations in it for solitude and repose.

Where there exists a known external cause of uneasiness, the cause may be removed, and the uneasiness will cease; but those imaginary distresses which men feel for want of real ones (and which are equally tormenting, and so far equally real), as they depend upon no single or assignable subject of uneasiness, admit oftentimes of no application or relief.

Hence a moderate pain, upon which the attention may fasten and spend itself, is to many a refreshment; as a fit of the gout will sometimes cure the spleen. And the same of any less violent agitation of the mind; as a literary controversy, a law-suit, a contested election, and, above all, gaming—the passion for which, in men of fortune and liberal minds, is only to be accounted for on this principle.

Thirdly, Neither does happiness consist in greatness, rank, or elevated station.

Were it true that all superiority afforded pleasure, it would follow that by how much we were the greater—that is, the more persons we were superior to—in the same proportion, so far as depended upon this cause, we should be the happier; but so it is, that no superiority yields any satisfaction, save that which we possess or obtain over those with whom we immediately compare ourselves. The shepherd perceives no pleasure in his superiority over his dog; the farmer, in his superiority over the shepherd; the lord, in his superiority over the farmer; nor the king, lastly, in his superiority over the lord.

Superiority, where there is no competition, is seldom contemplated—what most men are quite unconscious of.

But if the same shepherd can run, fight, or wrestle better than the peasants of his village; if the farmer can show better cattle, if he keeps a better horse, or be supposed to have a longer purse, than any farmer in the hundred; if the lord have more interest in an election, greater favour at court, a better house or larger estate than any nobleman in the county; if the king possess a more extensive territory, a more powerful fleet or army, a more splendid establishment, more loyal subjects, or more weight and authority in adjusting the affairs of nations, than any prince in Europe—in all these cases the parties feel an actual satisfaction in their superiority.

Now the conclusion that follows from hence is this,—that the pleasures of ambition, which are supposed to be peculiar to high stations, are in reality common to all conditions. The farrier who shoes a horse better, and who is in greater request for his skill, than any man within ten miles of him, possesses, for all that I can see, the delight of distinction and of excelling, as truly and substantially as the statesman, the soldier, and the scholar, who have filled Europe with the reputation of their wisdom, their valour, or their knowledge.

No superiority appears to be of any account but superiority over a rival. This, it is manifest, may exist wherever rivalships do; and rivalships fall out amongst men of all ranks and degrees. The object of emulation, the dignity or magnitude of this object, makes no difference; as it is not what either possesses

that constitutes the pleasure, but what one possesses more than the other.

Philosophy smiles at the contempt with which the rich and great speak of the petty strifes and competitions of the poor; not reflecting that these strifes and competitions are just as reasonable as their own, and the pleasure which success affords the same.

Our position is, that happiness does not consist in greatness. And this position we make out by showing that even what are supposed to be peculiar advantages of greatness, the pleasures of ambition and superiority, are in reality common to all conditions. But whether the pursuits of ambition be ever wise, whether they contribute more to the happiness or misery of the pursuers, is a different question, and a question concerning which we may be allowed to entertain great doubt. The pleasure of success is exquisite; so also is the anxiety of the pursuit, and the pain of disappointment: and what is the worst part of the account, the pleasure is short-lived. We soon cease to look back upon those whom we have left behind; new contests are engaged in, new prospects unfold themselves: a succession of struggles is kept up, whilst there is a rival left within the compass of our views and profession; and when there is none, the pleasure with the pursuit is at an end.

II. We have seen what happiness does not consist in. We are next to consider in what it does consist.

In the conduct of life, the great matter is, to know beforehand what will please us, and what pleasure will hold out. So far as we know this, our choice will be justified by the event. And this knowledge is more scarce and difficult than at first

sight it may seem to be: for sometimes pleasures which are wonderfully alluring and flattering in the prospect, turn out in the possession extremely insipid, or do not hold out as we expected: at other times, pleasures start up which never entered into our calculation, and which we might have missed by not foreseeing; whence we have reason to believe that we actually do miss many pleasures from the same cause. I say to know 'beforehand'; for, after the experiment is tried, it is commonly impracticable to retreat or change; besides, that shifting and changing is apt to generate a habit of restlessness, which is destructive of the happiness of every condition.

By reason of the original diversity of taste, capacity, and constitution, observable in the human species, and the still greater variety which habit and fashion have introduced in these particulars, it is impossible to propose any plan of happiness which will succeed to all, or any method of life which is universally eligible or practicable.

All that can be said is, that there remains a presumption in favour of those conditions of life in which men generally appear most cheerful and contented. For though the apparent happiness of mankind be not always a true measure of their real happiness, it is the best measure we have.

Taking this for my guide, I am inclined to believe that happiness consists,—

*First*, In the exercise of the social affections.

Those persons commonly possess good spirits who have about them many objects of affection and endearment, as wife, children, kindred, friends. And to the want of these may be imputed the peevishness of monks, and of such as lead a monastic life.

Of the same nature with the indulgence of our domestic affections, and equally refreshing to the spirits, is the pleasure which results from acts of ~~beauty~~ bounty and beneficence, exercised either in giving money, or in imparting to those who want it the assistance of our skill and profession.

Another main article of human happiness is,—

*Secondly*, The exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end.

It seems to be true, that no plentitude of present gratifications make the possessor happy for a continuance, unless he has something in reserve, something to hope for and look forward to. This I conclude to be the case, from comparing the alacrity and spirits of men who are engaged in any pursuit which interests them, with the dejection and *ennui* of almost all who are either born to so much that they want nothing more, or who have *used up* their satisfactions too soon, and drained the sources of them.

It is this intolerable vacuity of mind which carries the rich and great to the horse-course and the gaming table; and often engages them in contests and pursuits, of which the success bears no proportion to the solicitude and expense with which it is sought. An election for a disputed borough shall cost the parties twenty or thirty thousand pounds each—to say nothing of the anxiety, humiliation, and fatigue of the canvass; when a seat in the House of Commons, of exactly the same value, may be had for a tenth part of the money, and with no trouble. I do not mention this to blame the rich and great (perhaps they cannot do better), but in confirmation of what I have advanced.

Hope, which thus appears to be of so much importance to our happiness, is of two kinds: where there is something to be done towards attaining the object of our hope: and where there is nothing to be done. The first alone is of any value; the latter being apt to corrupt into impatience, having no power but to sit still and wait, which soon grows tiresome.

The doctrine delivered under this head may be readily admitted; but how to provide ourselves with a succession of pleasurable engagements is the difficulty. This requires two things: judgment in the choice of *ends* adapted to our opportunities; and a command of imagination, so as to be able, when the judgment has made choice of an end, to transfer a pleasure to the *means*; after which, the end may be forgotten as soon as we will.

Hence, those pleasures are most valuable, not which are most exquisite in the fruition, but which are most productive of engagement and activity in the pursuit.

A man who is in earnest in his endeavours after the happiness of a future state, has in this respect, an advantage over all the world; for he has constantly before his eyes an object of supreme importance, productive of perpetual engagement and activity, and of which the pursuit (which can be said of no pursuit besides) lasts him to his life's end. Yet even he must have many ends besides the *far end*; but then they will conduct to that, be subordinate, and in some way or other capable of being referred to that, and derive their satisfaction, or an addition of satisfaction, from that.

Engagement is everything: the more significant, however, our engagements are, the better; such as

the planning of laws, institutions, manufactures, charities, improvements, public works; and the endeavouring, by our interest, address, solicitations, and activity, to carry them into effect: or, upon a smaller scale, the procuring of a maintenance and fortune for our families by a course of industry and application to our callings, which forms and gives motion to the common occupations of life; training up a child, prosecuting a scheme for his future establishment, making ourselves masters of a language or a science, improving or managing an estate, labouring after a piece of preferment: and lastly, *any* engagement which is innocent is better than none, as the writing of a book, the building of a house, the laying out of a garden, the digging of a fish-pond—even the raising of a cucumber or a tulip.

Whilst our minds are taken up with the objects or business before us we are commonly happy, whatever the object or business be; when the mind is *absent*, and the thoughts are wandering to something else than that is passing in the place in which we are, we are often miserable.

*Thirdly*, Happiness depends upon the prudent constitution of the habits.

The art in which the secret of human happiness in a great measure consists, is to *set* the habits in such a manner that every change may be a change for the better. The habits themselves are much the same; for whatever is made habitual becomes smooth, and easy, and nearly indifferent. The return to an old habit is likewise easy, whatever the habit be. Therefore the advantage is with those habits which allow of an indulgence in the deviation from them. The luxurious receive no greater pleasure

from their dainties than the peasant does from his bread and cheese: but the peasant, whenever he goes abroad, finds a feast; whereas the epicure must be well entertained, to escape disgust. Those who spend every day at cards and those who go every day to plough, pass their time much alike; intent upon what they are about, wanting nothing, regretting nothing, they are both for the time in a state of ease: but then whatever suspends the occupation of the card-player distresses him; whereas to the labourer, every interruption is a refreshment; and this appears in the different effects that Sunday produces upon the two, which proves a day of recreation to the one, but a lamentable burden to the other. The man who has learned to live alone, feels his spirits enlivened whenever he enters into company, and takes his leave without regret; another, who has long been accustomed to a crowd, or continual succession of company, experiences in company no elevation of spirits, nor any greater satisfaction than what the man of a retired life finds in his chimney-corner. So far their conditions are equal; but let a change of place, fortune, or situation, separate the companion from his circle, his visitors, his club, common-room, or coffee-house, and the difference and advantage in the choice and constitution of the two habits will show itself. Solitude comes to the one, clothed with melancholy; to the other, it brings liberty and quiet. You will see the one fretful and restless, at a loss how to dispose of his time, till the hour come round when he may forget himself in bed; the other easy and satisfied, taking up his book or his pipe, as soon as he finds himself alone, ready to admit any little amusement that casts up, or to turn his hands and

attention to the first business that presents itself; or content, without either, to sit still and let his train of thought glide indolently through his brain, without much use, perhaps, or pleasure, but without *hankering* after anything better, and without irritation. A reader who has inured himself to books of science and argumentation, if a novel, a well-written pamphlet, and article of news, a narrative of a curious voyage, or a journal of a traveller, fall in his way, sits down to the repast with relish, enjoys its entertainment while it lasts, and can return, when it is over, to his graver reading without distaste. Another, with whom nothing will go down but works of humour and pleasantry, or whose curiosity must be interested by perpetual novelty, will consume a book-seller's window in half a forenoon: during which time he is rather in search of diversion than diverted; and as books to his taste are few and short, and rapidly read over, the stock is soon exhausted, when he is left without resource from this principal supply of harmless amusement.

So far as circumstances of fortune conduce to happiness, it is not the income which any man possesses, but the increase of income, that affords the pleasure. Two persons, of whom one begins with a hundred and advances his income to a thousand pounds a year, and the other sets off with a thousand and dwindles down to a hundred, may in the course of their time, have the receipt and spending of the same sum of money: yet their satisfaction, so far as fortune is concerned in it, will be very different; the series and sumtotal of their incomes being the same, it makes a wide difference at which end they begin.

*Fourthly, Happiness consists in health.*

By health I understand, as well freedom from bodily distempers, as that tranquillity, firmness, and alacrity of mind, which we call good spirits, and which may properly enough be included in our notion of health, as depending commonly upon the same causes, and yielding to the same management, as our bodily constitution.

Health, in this sense, is the one thing needful. Therefore no pains, expense, self-denial, or restraint to which we subject ourselves for the sake of health, is too much. Whether it require us to relinquish lucrative situations, to abstain from favourite indulgences, to control intemperate passions, or undergo tedious regimens; whatever difficulties it lays us under, a man, who pursues his happiness rationally and resolutely, will be content to submit.

When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel in ourselves a happiness independent of any particular outward gratification whatever, and of which we can give no account. This is an enjoyment which the Deity has annexed to life; and it probably constitutes, in a great measure, the happiness of infants and brutes, especially of the lower and sedentary orders of animals, as of oysters, periwinkles, and the like; for which I have sometimes been at a loss to find out amusement.

The above account of human happiness will justify the two following conclusions, which, although found in most books of morality, have seldom, I think, been supported by any sufficient reasons:—

First, That happiness is pretty equally distributed amongst the different orders of civil society.

Secondly, That vice has no advantage over virtue, even with respect to this world's happiness.

## D. Webster (1782-1852)

### FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION

This uncounted multitude before me, and around me, proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and, from the impulses of a common gratitude, turned reverently to heaven, in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground, distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June 1775 would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand, a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to suffer and enjoy the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that

we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence, which God allows to men on earth.

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes, and our own existence. It is more impossible for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say, that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great Discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thought; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men, who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their

labors and sufferings can never be without its interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient colony, forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it. No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event, in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate; that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The society, whose organ I am, was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought, that for this object no time could be more propitious, than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking, than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted; and that springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain, as

As long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that, which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know, that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself, can carry information of the events we commemorate, where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it for ever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that

unmeasured benefit, which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences, which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot, which must for ever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish, that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished, where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish, that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event, to every class and every age. We wish, that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish, that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish, that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come on all nations, must be expected to come on us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. We wish, that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important, that they might crowd and

distinguish centuries, are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life. When has it happened that history has had so much to record, in the same term of years, as since the 17th of June 1775? Our own Revolution, which, under other circumstances, might itself have been expected to occasion a war of half a century, has been achieved; twenty-four sovereign and independent states erected; and a general government established over them, so safe, so wise, so free, so practical, that we might well wonder its establishment should have been accomplished so soon, were it not far the greater wonder that it should have been established at all. Two or three millions of people have been augmented to twelve; and the great forests of the West prostrated beneath the arm of successful industry; and the dwellers on the banks of the Ohio and the Mississippi, become the fellow citizens and neighbours of those who cultivate the hills of New England. We have a commerce, that leaves no sea unexplored; navies, which take no law from superior force; revenues, adequate to all the exigencies of government, almost without taxation; and peace with all nations, founded on equal rights and mutual respect.

Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones, which had stood tranquil for ages. On this, our continent, our own example has been followed; and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun; and at this

moment the dominion of European power, in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever.

In the mean time, both in Europe and America, such has been the general progress of knowledge; such the improvements in legislation, in commerce, in the arts, in letters, and above all in liberal ideas, and the general spirit of the age, that the whole world seems changed.

Yet, notwithstanding that this is but a faint abstract of the things which have happened since the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, we are but fifty years removed from it; and we now stand here, to enjoy all the blessings of our own condition, and to look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world, while we hold still among us some of those, who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit, once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

Venerable Men! you have come down to us, from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now, where you stood, fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers, and your neighbours, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else, how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewn with the dead and the dying;

the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with an universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave forever. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amidst this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance, and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived, at least, long enough to know that your work had

been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

‘ another morn,  
Risen on mid-noon; ’—

and the sky, on which you closed your eyes, was cloudless.

But—ah!—Him! the first great Martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands; whom nothing brought hither, but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit; Him! cut off by Providence, in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling, ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood, like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! how shall I struggle with the emotions, that stifle the utterance of thy name!—Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found, that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit!

But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits, who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary Army.

Veterans! you are the remnant of many a well fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. Veterans of half a century! when in your youthful days, you put every thing at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive; at a moment of national prosperity, such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met, here, to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers and to receive the overflowings of an universal gratitude.

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, throng to your embraces. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces; when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succour in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory; then look abroad into this lovely land, which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad into the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude, which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind.

The occasion does not require of me any particular account of the battle of the 17th of June, nor any detailed narrative of the events which immediately preceded it. These are familiarly known to all. In the progress of the great and interesting controversy, Massachusetts and the town of Boston had become early and marked objects of the displeasure of the British Parliament. This had been manifested, in the Act for altering the Government of the Province, and in that for shutting up the Port of Boston. Nothing sheds more honor on our early history, and nothing better shows how little the feelings and sentiments of the colonies were known or regarded in England, than the impression which these measures everywhere produced in America. It had been anticipated, that while the other colonies would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage, which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns, would be greedily enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intenseness of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people! Everywhere the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, everywhere, to show to the whole world, that the colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. The temptation to profit by the punishment of Boston was strongest to our neighbours of Salem. Yet Salem was precisely the place, where this miserable proffer

was spurned, in a tone of the most lofty self-respect, and the most indignant patriotism. 'We are deeply affected,' said its inhabitants, 'with the sense of our public calamities; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the Province, greatly excite our commiseration. By shutting up the Port of Boston, some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither and to our benefit; but we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge a thought to seize on wealth, and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbours.' These noble sentiments were not confined to our immediate vicinity. In that day of general affection and brotherhood, the blow given to Boston smote on every patriotic heart, from one end of the country to the other. Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as Connecticut and New Hampshire, felt and proclaimed the cause to be their own. The Continental Congress, then holding its first session in Philadelphia, expressed its sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston, and addresses were received from all quarters, assuring them that the cause was a common one and should be met by common efforts and common sacrifices. The Congress of Massachusetts responded to these assurances; and in an address to the Congress at Philadelphia, bearing the official signature, perhaps among the last, of the immortal Warren, notwithstanding the severity of its suffering and the magnitude of the dangers which threatened it, it was declared, that this colony 'is ready, at all times, to spend and to be spent in the cause of America.'

But the hour drew nigh, which was to put professions to the proof, and to determine whether the

authors of these mutual pledges were ready to seal them in blood. The tidings of Lexington and Concord had no sooner spread, than it was universally felt, that the time was at last come for action. A spirit pervaded all ranks, not transient, not boisterous, but deep, solemn, determined,

*' totamque infusa per artus*

*Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.'*

War, on their own soil and at their own doors, was, indeed, a strange work to the yeomanry of New England; but their consciences were convinced of its necessity, their country called them to it, and they did not withhold themselves from the perilous trial. The ordinary occupations of life were abandoned; the plough was staid in the unfinished furrow; wives gave up their husbands, and mothers gave up their sons, to the battles of a civil war. Death might come, in honor, on the field; it might come, in disgrace, on the scaffold. For either and for both they were prepared. The sentiment of Quincy was full in their hearts. 'Blandishments,' said that distinguished son of genius and patriotism, 'will not fascinate us, nor will threats of a halter intimidate; for, under God, we are determined, that wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men.'

The 17th of June saw the four New England colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or to fall together; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them forever, one cause, one country, one heart.

The battle of Bunker Hill was attended with the most important effects beyond its immediate result as a military engagement. It created at once a state

of open, public war. There could now be no longer a question of proceeding against individuals, as guilty of treason or rebellion. That fearful crisis was past. The appeal now lay to the sword, and the only question was, whether the spirit and the resources of the people would hold out, till the object should be accomplished. Nor were its general consequences confined to our own country. The previous proceedings of the colonies, their appeals, resolutions, and addresses, had made their cause known to Europe. Without boasting, we may say, that in no age or country, has the public cause been maintained with more force of argument, more power of illustration, or more of that persuasion which excited feeling and elevated principle can alone bestow, than the revolutionary state papers exhibit. These papers will forever deserve to be studied, not only for the spirit which they breathe, but for the ability with which they were written.

To this able vindication of their cause, the colonies had now added a practical and severe proof of their own true devotion to it, and evidence also of the power which they could bring to its support. All now saw, that if America fell, she would not fall without a struggle. Men felt sympathy and regard, as well as surprise, when they beheld these infant states, remote, unknown, unaided, encounter the power of England, and in the first considerable battle, leave more of their enemies dead on the field, in proportion to the number of combatants, than they had recently known in the wars of Europe.

Information of these events, circulating through Europe, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me. He has not forgotten the emotion, which

the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy to the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

Fortunate, fortunate man ! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God, for the circumstances of your extraordinary life ! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain, that the electric spark of Liberty should be conducted, through you, from the new world to the old ; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott ; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor ; and within which the corner stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the

present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you, and yours, forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this edifice. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Sir, monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them, this day, to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, Sullivan, and Lincoln. Sir, we have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. *Serus in cælum redeas.* Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

The leading reflection, to which this occasion seems to invite us, respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years, since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several

structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current beneath, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men, in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowledge has, in our time, triumphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the *world* will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors, or fellow-workers, on the theatre of intellectual operation.

From these causes, important improvements have taken place in the personal condition of individuals. Generally speaking, mankind are not only better

fed, and better clothed, but they are able also to enjoy more leisure; they possess more refinement and more self-respect. A superior tone of education, manners, and habits prevails. This remark, most true in its application to our own country, is also partly true, when applied elsewhere. It is proved by the vastly augmented consumption of those articles of manufacture and of commerce, which contribute to the comforts and the decencies of life; an augmentation which has far outrun the progress of population. And while the unexampled and almost incredible use of machinery would seem to supply the place of labor, labor still finds its occupation and its reward; so wisely has Providence adjusted men's wants and desires to their condition and their capacity.

Any adequate survey, however, of the progress made in the last half century, in the polite and the mechanic arts, in machinery and manufactures, in commerce and agriculture, in letters and in science, would require volumes. I must abstain wholly from these subjects, and turn, for a moment, to the contemplation of what has been done on the great question of politics and government. This is the master topic of the age; and during the whole fifty years, it has intensely occupied the thoughts of men. The nature of civil government, its ends and uses, have been canvassed and investigated; ancient opinions attacked and defended; new ideas recommended and resisted, by whatever power the mind of man could bring to the controversy. From the closet and the public halls the debate has been transferred to the field; and the world has been shaken by wars of unexampled magnitude, and the greatest variety of fortune. A day of peace has at

length succeeded; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society. And without dwelling on particular circumstances, it is most apparent, that, from the beforementioned causes of augmented knowledge and improved individual attention, a real, substantial, and important change has taken place, and is taking place, greatly beneficial, on the whole, to human liberty and human happiness.

The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse; it whirled along with a fearful celerity; till at length, like the chariot wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for making the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great portion of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our

countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular, on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all, into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired, is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases

by the multiple of its own power; all its ends become means; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has ascertained, and nothing can ascertain, the amount of ultimate product.

Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think, and to reason, on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the Representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

When Louis XIV said, "I am the state," he expressed the essence of the doctrine of unlimited power. By the rules of that system, the people are disconnected from the state; they are its subjects; it is their lord. These ideas, founded in the love of power, and long supported by the excess and the abuse of it, are yielding, in our age, to other opinions; and the civilized world seems at last to be proceeding to the conviction of that fundamental and manifest truth, that the powers of government are but a trust, and that they cannot be lawfully exercised but for the good of the community. As knowledge is more and more extended, this conviction becomes more and more general. Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams. The prayer of the Grecian combatant, when enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness, is the appropriate political supplication for the people of

every country not yet blessed with free institutions ;

‘ Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore,  
Give me to SEE—and Ajax asks no more.’

We may hope, that the growing influence of enlightened sentiments will promote the permanent peace of the world. Wars, to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute, that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments, which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, and add it to other powers, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greece at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age, when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have

mentioned, should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any who would hazard it.

It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction, in our undertaking, to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. Let her be assured, that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or another, in some place or another, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

Among the great events of the half century, we must reckon, certainly, the Revolution of South America; and we are not likely to overrate the importance of that Revolution, either to the people of the country itself or to the rest of the world. The late Spanish colonies, now independent states, under circumstances less favorable, doubtless, than attended our own Revolution, have yet successfully commenced their national existence. They have accomplished the great object of establishing their independence; they are known and acknowledged in the world; and although in regard to their systems of government,

their sentiments on religious toleration, and their provisions for public instruction, they may have yet much to learn, it must be admitted that they have risen to the condition of settled and established states, more rapidly than could have been reasonably anticipated. They already furnish an exhilarating example of the difference between free governments and despotic misrule. Their commerce, at this moment, creates a new activity in all the great marts of the world. They show themselves able, by an exchange of commodities, to bear an useful part in the intercourse of nations. A new spirit of enterprise and industry begins to prevail; all the great interests of society receive a salutary impulse; and the progress of information not only testifies to an improved condition, but constitutes, itself, the highest and most essential improvement.

When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the civilized world. The thirteen little colonies of North America habitually called themselves the 'Continent.' Borne down by colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there hath been, as it were, a new creation. The Southern Hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit, which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. And let us

endeavour to comprehend, in all its magnitude, and to feel, in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows, that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is, to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the Representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed, that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us authorize the belief, that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, perhaps not always for the better, in form, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as

other systems. We know, indeed, that, in our country, any other is impossible. The *Principle of Free Governments* adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it; immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those are daily dropping from among us who established our liberty and our government. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for Independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects, which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four states are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, **OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY,**

AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid Monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze, with admiration, forever.

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## Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

### THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Son cœur est un luth suspendu ;  
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.

BERANGER.

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country ; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable ; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium : the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I

paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? • It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner

in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognisable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of **collateral** issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the “House of Usher”—an appellation which seemed to include, in the

minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn: a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled webwork from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling

condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded one of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this—I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate

Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation—that leaden, self-balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the

irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. “I shall perish,” said he, “I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect—in terror. In this unnerved—in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantash, FEAR.”

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be re-stated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister—his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. “Her decease,” he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, “would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers.” While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had

buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt

to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphureous lustre over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why;—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its

vast extent, and no torch or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted *for*. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

## I

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace—  
Radiant palace—reared its head.

In the monarch Thought's dominion,  
It stood there ;  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair.

## II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow,  
(This—all this—was in the olden  
Time long ago)  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A winged odor went away.

## III

Wanderers in that happy valley  
Through two luminous windows saw  
Spirits moving musically  
To a lute's well-tuned law,  
Round about a throne where, sitting,  
Porphyrogene.  
In state his glory well befitting,  
The ruler of the realm was seen.

## IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

## V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate ;  
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him, desolate !)  
And round about his home the glory  
That blushed and bloomed  
Is but a dim-remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.

## VI

And travellers now within that valley  
Through the red-litten windows see  
Vast forms that move fantastically  
To a discordant melody ;  
While, like a ghastly rapid river,  
Through the pale door  
A hideous throng rush out forever,  
And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty (for other men\* have thought thus), as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the

\* Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See "Chemical Essays," Vol. V.

full extent, or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentence had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentence—was to be seen, he said—(and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt* and *Chartreuse* of Gresset; the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage* of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the *Chiromancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and of Dela Chambre; the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum*, by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were

passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigiliæ Mortuorum secundum chorum Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ*.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for the singular proceeding, was on which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp,

and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested by attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much, if not all, of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath

of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

“And you have not seen it?” he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—“you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall.” Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded

his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

“ You must not—you shall not behold this!” said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. “ These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together.

The antique volume which I had taken up was the “ Mad Trist ” of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I

had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

“ And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and malicious turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarmed and reverberated throughout the forest.”

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some

very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

“ But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten—

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;

Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard.”

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement; for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently

distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

“ And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the

shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I *dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway

of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—" *Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim of the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed,

this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “*House of Usher*.”

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## Alexander Smith (1830-1867)

### DREAMTHORP \*

It matters not to relate how or when I became a denizen of Dreamthorp; it will be sufficient to say that I am not a born native, but that I came to reside in it a good while ago now. The several towns and villages in which, in my time, I have pitched a tent did not please, for one obscure reason or another: this one was too large, t' other too small; but when, on a summer evening about the hour of eight, I first beheld Dreamthorp, with its westward-looking windows painted by sunset, its children playing in the single straggling street, the mothers knitting at the open doors, the fathers standing about in long white blouses, chatting or smoking; the great tower of the ruined castle rising high into the rosy air, with a whole troop of swallows—by distance made as small as gnats—skimming about its rents and fissures;—when I first beheld all this, I felt instinctively that my knapsack might be taken off my shoulders, that my tired feet might wander no more, that at last, on the planet, I had found a home. From that evening I have dwelt here, and the only journey I am like now to make, is the very inconsiderable one, so far at least as distance is concerned, from the house in which I live to the graveyard beside the ruined castle. There, with the former inhabitants of the place, I trust to sleep quietly

\* From *Dreamthorp, etc.*, by kind permission of the publishers, The Oxford University Press.

enough, and nature will draw over our heads her coverlet of green sod, and tenderly tuck us in, as a mother her sleeping ones, so that no sound from the world shall ever reach us, and no sorrow trouble us any more.

The village stands far inland; and the streams that trot through the soft green valleys all about have as little knowledge of the sea, as the three-years' child of the storms and passions of manhood. The surrounding country is smooth and green, full of undulations; and pleasant country roads strike through it in every direction, bound for distant towns and villages, yet in no hurry to reach them. On these roads the lark in summer is continually heard; nests are plentiful in the hedges and dry ditches; and on the grassy banks, and at the feet of the bowed dikes, the blue-eyed speedwell smiles its benison on the passing wayfarer. On these roads you may walk for a year and encounter nothing more remarkable than the country cart, troops of tawny children from the woods, laden with primroses, and at long intervals—for people in this district live to a ripe age—a black funeral creeping in from some remote hamlet; and to this last the people reverently doff their hats and stand aside. Death does not walk about here often, but when he does, he receives as much respect as the squire himself. Everything round one is unhurried, quiet, moss-grown, and orderly. Season follows in the track of season, and one year can hardly be distinguished from another. Time should be measured here by the silent dial, rather than by the ticking clock, or by the chimes of the church. Dreamthorp can boast of a respectable antiquity, and in it the trade of the builder is unknown. Ever since I

remember, not a single stone has been laid on the top of another. The castle, inhabited now by jackdaws and starlings, is old; the chapel which adjoins it is older still; and the lake behind both, and in which their shadows sleep, is, I suppose, as old as Adam. A fountain in the market-place, all mouths and faces and curious arabesques—as dry, however as the castle moat—has a tradition connected with it; and a great noble riding through the street one day several hundred years ago, was shot from a window by a man whom he had injured. The death of this noble is the chief link which connects the place with authentic history. The houses are old, and remote dates may yet be deciphered on the stones above the doors; the apple-trees are mossed and ancient; countless generations of sparrows have bred in the thatched roofs, and thereon have chirped out their lives. In every room of the place men have been born, men have died. On Dreamthorp centuries have fallen, and have left no more trace than have last winter's snowflakes. This commonplace sequence and flowing on of life is immeasurably affecting. That winter morning when Charles lost his head in front of the banqueting-hall of his own palace, the icicles hung from the eaves of the houses here, and the clown kicked the snowballs from his clouted shoon, and thought but of his supper when, at three o'clock, the red sun set in the purple mist. On that Sunday in June while Waterloo was going on, the gossips, after morning service, stood on the country roads discussing agricultural prospects, without the slightest suspicion that the day passing over their heads would be a famous one in the calendar. Battles have been fought, kings have died, history has transacted itself; but, all unheeding and

untouched, Dreamthorp has watched apple-trees redden, and wheat ripen, and smoked its pipe, and quaffed its mug of beer, and rejoiced over its new-born children, and with proper solemnity carried its dead to the churchyard. As I gaze on the village of my adoption, I think of many things very far removed, and seem to get closer to them. The last setting sun that Shakespeare saw reddened the windows here, and struck warmly on the faces of the hinds coming home from the fields. The mighty storm that raged while Cromwell lay a-dying made all the oak-woods groan round about here, and tore the thatch from the very roofs I gaze upon. When I think of this, I can almost, so to speak, lay my hand on Shakespeare and on Cromwell. These poor walls were contemporaries of both, and I find something affecting in the thought. The mere soil is, of course, far older than either, but *it* does not touch one in the same way. A wall is the creation of a human hand, the soil is not.

This place suits my whim, and I like it better year after year. As with everything else, since I began to love it I find it gradually growing beautiful. Dreamthorp—a castle, a chapel, a lake, a straggling strip of gray houses, with a blue film of smoke over all—lies embosomed in emerald. Summer, with its daisies, runs up to every cottage door. From the little height where I am now sitting, I see it beneath me. Nothing could be more peaceful. The wind and the birds fly over it. A passing sunbeam makes brilliant a white gable-end, and brings out the colours of the blossomed apple-tree beyond, and disappears. I see figures in the street, but hear them not. The hands on the church clock seem always pointing to one hour. Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon

sunshine. I make a frame of my fingers, and look at my picture. On the walls of the next Academy's Exhibition will hang nothing half so beautiful.

My village is, I think, a special favourite of summer's. Every window-sill in it she touches with colour and fragrance; everywhere she wakens the drowsy murmurs of the hives; every place she scents with apple-blossom. Traces of her hand are to be seen on the weir beside the ruined mill; and even the canal, along which the barges come and go, has a great white water-lily asleep on its olive-coloured face. Never was velvet on a monarch's robe so gorgeous as the green mosses that be-ruff the roofs of farm and cottage, when the sunbeam slants on them and goes. The old road out towards the common, and the hoary dikes that might have been built in the reign of Alfred, have not been forgotten by the generous adorning season; for every fissure has its mossy cushion, and the old blocks themselves are washed by the loveliest gray-green lichens in the world, and the large loose stones lying on the ground have gathered to themselves the peacefulest mossy coverings. Some of these have not been disturbed for a century. Summer has adorned my village as gaily, and taken as much pleasure in the task, as the people of old, when Elizabeth was queen, took in the adornment of the May-pole against a summer festival. And, just think, not only Dreamthorp, but every English village she has made beautiful after one fashion or another—making vivid green the hill slope on which straggling white Welsh hamlets hang right opposite the sea; drowning in apple-blossom the red Sussex ones in the fat valley. And think, once more, every spear of grass in England she has touched with a livelier green; the crest

of every bird she has burnished; every old wall between the four seas has received her mossy and licheny attentions; every nook in every forest she has sown with pale flowers, every marsh she has dashed with the fires of the marigold. And in the wonderful night the moon knows, she hangs—the planet on which so many millions of us fight, and sin, and agonise, and die—a sphere of glow-worm light.

Having discoursed so long about Dreamthorp, it is but fair that I should now introduce you to her lions. These are, for the most part, of a commonplace kind; and I am afraid that, if you wish to find romance in them, you must bring it with you. I might speak of the old church-tower, or of the church-yard beneath it, in which the village holds its dead, each resting-place marked by a simple stone, on which is inscribed the name and age of the sleeper, and a Scripture text beneath, in which live our hopes of immortality. But, on the whole, perhaps it will be better to begin with the canal, which wears on its olive-coloured face the big white water-lily already chronicled. Such a secluded place is Dreamthorp that the railway does not come near, and the canal is the only thing that connects it with the world. It stands high, and from it the undulating country may be seen stretching away into the gray of distance, with hills and woods, and stains of smoke which mark the sites of villages. Every now and then a horse comes staggering along the towing-path, trailing a sleepy barge filled with merchandise. A quiet, indolent life these bargemen lead in the summer days. One lies stretched at his length on the sun-heated plank; his comrade sits smoking in the little dog hut, which I suppose he calls a cabin. Silently they

come and go; silently the wooden bridge lifts to let them through. The horse stops at the bridge-house for a drink, and there I like to walk a little with the men. They served instead of a newspaper, and retail with great willingness the news they have picked up in their progress from town to town. I am told they sometimes marvel who the old gentleman is who accosts them from beneath a huge umbrella in the sun, and that they think him either very wise or very foolish. Not in the least unnatural! We are great friends, I believe—evidence of which they occasionally exhibit by requesting me to disburse a trifle for drink-money. This canal is a great haunt of mine of an evening. The water hardly invites one to bathe in it, and a delicate stomach might suspect the flavour of the eels caught therein; yet, to my thinking, it is not in the least destitute of beauty. A barge trailing up through it in the sunset is a pretty sight; and the heavenly crimsons and purples sleep quite lovingly upon its glossy ripples. Nor does the evening star disdain it, for as I walk along I see it mirrored therein as clearly as in the waters of the Mediterranean itself.

The old castle and chapel already alluded to are, perhaps, to a stranger, the points of attraction in Dreamthorp. Back from the houses is the lake, on the green sloping banks of which, with broken windows and tombs, the ruins stand. As it is noon, and the weather is warm, let us go and sit on a turret. Here, on these very steps, as old ballads tell, a queen sat once, day after day, looking southward for the light of returning spears. I bethink me that yesterday, no further gone, I went to visit a consumptive shoemaker; seated here I can single out his very house, nay, the very window of the room in

which he is lying. On that straw roof might the raven alight, and flap his sable wings. There, at this moment is the supreme tragedy being enacted. A woman is weeping there, and little children are looking on with a sore bewilderment. Before nightfall the poor peaked face of the bowed artisan will have gathered its ineffable peace, and the widow will be led away from the bedside by the tenderness of neighbours, and the cries of the orphan brood will be stilled. And yet this present indubitable suffering and loss does not touch me like the sorrow of the woman of the ballad, the phantom probably of a minstrel's brain. The shoemaker will be forgotten—I shall be forgotten; and long after visitors will sit here and look out on the landscape and murmur the simple lines. But why do death and dying obtrude themselves at the present moment? On the turret opposite, about the distance of a gunshot, is as pretty a sight as eye could wish to see. Two young people, strangers apparently, have come to visit the ruin. Neither the ballad queen, nor the shoemaker down yonder, whose respirations are getting shorter and shorter, touches them in the least. They are merry and happy, and the graybeard turret has not the heart to thrust a foolish moral upon them. They would not thank him if he did, I daresay. Perhaps they could not understand him. Time enough! Twenty years hence they will be able to sit down at his feet, and count griefs with him, and tell him tale for tale. Human hearts get ruinous in so much less time than stone walls and towers. See, the young man has thrown himself down at the girl's feet on a little space of grass. In her scarlet cloak she looks like a blossom springing out of a crevice on the ruined steps. He gives her a

flower, and she bows her face down over it almost to her knees. What did the flower say? Is it to hide a blush? He looks delighted; and I almost fancy I see a proud colour on his brow. As I gaze, these young people make for me a perfect idyl. The generous, ungrudging sun, the melancholy ruin, decked; like mad Lear, with the flowers and ivies of forgetfulness and grief, and between them, sweet and evanescent, human truth and love!

Love!—does it yet walk the world, or is it imprisoned in poems and romances? Has not the circulating library become the sole home of the passion? Is love not become the exclusive property of novelists and playwrights, to be used by them only for professional purposes? Surely, if the men I see are lovers, or ever have been lovers, they would be nobler than they are. The knowledge that he is beloved should—*must* make a man tender, gentle, upright, pure. While yet a youngster in a jacket, I can remember falling desperately in love with a young lady several years my senior—after the fashion of youngsters in jackets. Could I have fibbed in these days? Could I have betrayed a comrade? Could I have stolen eggs or callow young from the nest? Could I have stood quietly by and seen the weak or the maimed bullied? Nay, verily! In these absurd days she lighted up the whole world for me. To sit in the same room with her was like the happiness of perpetual holiday; when she asked me to run a message for her, or to do any, the slightest, service for her, I felt as if a patent of nobility were conferred on me. I kept my passion to myself, like a cake, and nibbled it in private. Juliet was several years my senior, and had a lover—was, in point of fact, actually

engaged and, in looking back, I can remember I was too much in love to feel the slightest twinge of jealousy. I remember also seeing Romeo for the first time, and thinking him a greater man than Caesar or Napoleon. The worth I credited him with, the cleverness, the goodness, the everything! He awed me by his manner and bearing. He accepted that girl's love coolly and as a matter of course: it put him no more about than a crown and sceptre puts about a king. What I would have given my life to possess—being only fourteen, it was not much to part with after all—he wore lightly, as he wore his gloves or his cane. It did not seem a bit too good for him. His self-possession appalled me. If I had seen him take the sun out of the sky, and put it into his breeches' pocket, I don't think I should have been in the least degree surprised. Well, years after, when I had discarded my passion with my jacket, I have assisted this middle-aged Romeo home from a roystering wine-party, and heard him hiccup out his marital annoyances, with the strangest remembrances of old times, and the strangest deductions therefrom. Did that man with the idiotic laugh and the blurred utterance ever love? Was he ever capable of loving? I protest I have my doubts. But where are my young people? Gone! So it is always. We begin to moralise and look wise, and Beauty, who is something of a coquette, and of an exacting turn of mind, and likes attentions, gets disgusted with our wisdom or our stupidity, and goes off in a huff. Let the baggage go! The ruined chapel adjoins the ruined castle on which I am now sitting, and is evidently a building of much older date. It is a mere shell now. It is quite roofless, ivy covers it in part; the stone tracery of the

great western window is yet intact, but the coloured glass is gone with the splendid vestments of the abbot, the fuming incense, the chanting choirs, and the patient, sad-eyed monks, who muttered *Aves*, shrived guilt, and illuminated missals. Time was when this place breathed actual benedictions, and was a home of active peace. At present it is visited only by the stranger, and delights but the antiquary. The village people have so little respect for it, that they do not even consider it haunted. There are several tombs in the interior bearing knights' escutcheons, which time had sadly defaced. The dust you stand upon is noble. Earls have been brought here in dented mail from battle, and earls' wives from the pangs of child-bearing. The last trumpet will break the slumber of a right honourable company. One of the tombs—the most perfect of all in point of preservation—I look at often, and try to conjecture what it commemorates. With all my fancies, I can get no further than the old story of love and death. There, on the slab, the white figures sleep; marble hands, folded in prayer, on marble breasts. And I like to think that he was brave, she beautiful; that although the monument is worn by time, and sullied by the stains of the weather, the qualities which it commemorates—husbandly and wifely affection, courtesy, courage, knightly scorn of wrong and falsehood, meekness, penitence, charity—are existing yet somewhere, recognisable by each other. The man who in this world can keep the whiteness of his soul, is not likely to lose it in any other.

In summer I spent a good deal of time floating about the lake. The landing-place to which my boat is tethered is ruinous, like the chapel and palace, and my embarkation causes quite a stir in the sleepy little

village. Small boys leave their games and mud-pies, and gather round in silence; they have seen me get off a hundred times, but their interest in the matter seems always new. Not unfrequently an idle cobbler, in red nightcap and leathern apron, leans on a broken stile, and honours my proceedings with his attention. I shoot off, and the human knot dissolves. The lake contains three islands, each with a solitary tree, and on these islands the swans breed. I feed the birds daily with bits of bread. See, one comes gliding towards me, with superbly arched neck, to receive its customary alms! How widely beautiful its motions! How haughtily it begs! The green pasture lands run down to the edge of the water, and into it in the afternoons the red kine wade and stand knee-deep in their shadows, surrounded by troops of flies. Patiently the honest creatures abide the attacks of their tormentors. Now one swishes itself with its tail—now its neighbour flaps a huge ear. I draw my oars alongside, and let my boat float at its own will. The soft blue heavenly abysses, the wandering streams of vapour, the long beaches of rippled cloud, are glassed and repeated in the lake. Dreamthorp is silent as a picture, the voices of the children are mute; and the smoke from the houses, the blue pillars all sloping in one angle, float upwards as if in sleep. Grave and stern the old castle rises from its emerald banks, which long ago came down to the lake in terrace on terrace, gay with fruits and flowers, and with stone nymph and satyrs hid in every nook. Silent and empty enough to-day! A flock of daws suddenly bursts out from a turret, and round and round they wheel, as if in panic. Has some great scandal exploded? Has a conspiracy been discovered? Has a revolution broken

out? The excitement has subsided, and one of them, perched on the old banner-staff, chatters confidentially to himself as he, sideways, eyes the world, beneath him. Floating about thus, time passes swiftly, for, before I know where I am, the kine have withdrawn from the lake to couch on the herbage, while one on a little height is lowing for the milkmaid and her pails. Along the road I see the labourers coming home for supper, while the sun setting behind me makes the village windows blaze; and so I take out my oars, and pull leisurely through waters faintly flushed with evening colours.

I do not think that Mr. Buckle could have written his 'History of Civilisation' in Dreamthorp, because in it books, conversation, and the other appurtenances of intellectual life, are not to be procured. I am acquainted with birds, and the building of nests—with wild-flowers, and the seasons in which they blow—but with the big world far away, with what men and women are thinking, and doing, and saying, I am acquainted only through the *Times*, and the occasional magazine or review, sent by friends whom I have not looked upon for years, but by whom, it seems, I am not yet forgotten. The village has but few intellectual wants, and the intellectual supply is strictly measured by the demand. Still there is something. Down in the village, and opposite the curiously-carved fountain, is a schoolroom which can accommodate a couple of hundred people on a pinch. There are our public meetings held. Musical entertainments have been given there by a single performer. In that schoolroom last winter an American biologist terrified the villagers, and, to their simple understandings, mingled up the next world

with this. Now and again some rare bird of an itinerant lecturer covers dead walls with posters, yellow and blue, and to that schoolroom we flock to hear him. His rounded periods the eloquent gentleman devotes amidst a respectful silence. His audience do not understand him, but they see that the clergyman does, and the doctor does; and so they are content, and look as attentive and wise as possible. Then in connexion with the schoolroom, there is a public library, where books are exchanged once a month. This library is a kind of Greenwich Hospital for disabled novels and romances. Each of these books has been in the wars; some are unquestionable antiques. The tears of three generations have fallen upon their dusky pages. The heroes and the heroines are of another age than ours. Sir Charles Grandison is standing with his hat under his arm. Tom Jones plops from the tree into the water, to the infinite distress of Sophia. Moses comes home from market with his stock of shagreen spectacles. Lovers, warriors, and villains—as dead to the present generation of readers as Cambyses—are weeping, fighting, and intriguing. These books, tattered and torn as they are, are read with delight to-day. The viands are celestial if set forth on a dingy tablecloth. The gaps and chasms which occur in pathetic or perilous chapters are felt to be personal calamities. It is with a certain feeling of tenderness that I look upon these books; I think of the dead fingers that have turned over the leaves, of the dead eyes that have travelled along the lines. An old novel has a history of its own. When fresh and new, and before it had breathed its secret, it lay on my lady's table. She killed the weary day with it, and when night came it

was placed beneath her pillow. At the seaside a couple of foolish heads have bent over it, hands have touched and tingled, and it has heard vows and protestations as passionate as any its pages contained. Coming down in the world, Cinderella in the kitchen has blubbered over it by the light of a surreptitious candle, conceiving herself the while the magnificent Georgiana, and Lord Mordaunt, Georgiana's lover, the pot-boy round the corner. Tied up with many a dingy brother, the auctioneer knocks the bundle down to the bidder of a few pence, and it finds its way to the quiet cove of some village library, where with some difficulty—as if from want of teeth, and with numerous interruptions—as if from lack of memory, it tells its old stories, and wakes tears, and blushes, and laughter as of yore. Thus it spends its age, and in a few years it will become unintelligible, and then, in the dust-bin, like poor human mortals in the grave, it will rest from all its labours. It is impossible to estimate the benefit which such books have conferred. How often have they loosed the chain of circumstance! What unfamiliar tears—what unfamiliar laughter they have caused! What chivalry and tenderness they have infused into rustic loves! Of what weary hours they have cheated and beguiled their readers! The big, solemn history-books are in excellent preservation; the story-books are defaced and frayed, and their out-of-elbows condition is their pride, and the best justification of their existence. They are tashed, as roses are, by being eagerly handled and smelt. I observe, too, that the most ancient romances are not in every case the most severely worn. It is the pace that tells in horses, men, and books. There are Nestors wonderfully hale; there are juveniles in a state of

dilapidation. One of the youngest books, 'The Old Curiosity Shop,' is absolutely falling to pieces. That book, like Italy, is possessor of the fatal gift; but happily, in its case, everything can be rectified by a new edition. We have buried warriors and poets, princes and queens, but no one of these was followed to the grave by sincerer mourners than was little Nell.

Besides the itinerant lecturer, and the permanent library, we have the Sunday sermon. These sum up the intellectual aids and furtherances of the whole place. We have a church and a chapel, and I attend both. The Dreamthorp people are Dissenters, for the most part; why, I never could understand; because dissent implies a certain intellectual effort. But Dissenters they are, and Dissenters they are likely to remain. In an ungainly building, filled with hard gaunt pews, without an organ, without a touch of colour in the windows, with nothing to stir the imagination of the devotional sense, the simple people worship. On Sunday, they are put upon a diet of spiritual bread-and-water. Personally, I should desire more generous food. But the labouring people listen attentively, till once they fall asleep, and they wake up to receive the benediction with a feeling of having done their duty. They know they ought to go to chapel, and they go. I go likewise, from habit, although I have long ago lost the power of following a discourse. In my pew, and whilst the clergyman is going on, I think of the strangest things—of the tree at the window, of the congregation of the dead outside, of the wheat-fields and the corn-fields beyond and all around. And the odd thing is, that it is during sermon only that my mind flies off at a tangent and busies itself with things removed from

the place and the circumstances. Whenever it is finished fancy returns from her wanderings, and I am alive to the objects around me. The clergyman knows my humour, and is good Christian enough to forgive me; and he smiles good-humouredly when I ask him to let me have the chapel keys, that I may enter, when in the mood, and preach a sermon to myself. To my mind, an empty chapel is impressive; a crowded one, comparatively a commonplace affair. Alone, I could choose my own text, and my silent discourse would not be without its practical applications.

An idle life I live in this place, as the world counts it; but then I have the satisfaction of differing from the world as to the meaning of idleness. A windmill twirling its arms all day is admirable only when there is corn to grind. Twirling its arms for the mere barren pleasure of twirling them, or for the sake of looking busy, does not deserve any rapturous pæn of praise. I must be made happy after my own fashion, not after the fashion of other people. Here I can live as I please, here I can throw the reins on the neck of my whim. Here I play with my own thoughts; here I ripen for the grave.

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## Lord Avebury (1834-1913)

### THE STUDY OF NATURE\*

*A discourse given at the Nature Study Exhibition in  
London, 1902.*

The subject on which I have been asked to address you is "The Study of Nature." This appears to imply that Nature is worth studying. It would indeed almost have seemed as if this was a self-evident proposition. We live in a wonderful and beautiful world, full of interest, and one which it is most important to understand, and dangerous, if not fatal, to misunderstand. Yet until lately our elementary schools were practically confined to reading, writing, and arithmetic; our grammar schools mainly, as the very name denotes, grammar; while our great public schools even now omit the study of Nature altogether, or devote to it only an hour or two in the week, snatched from the insatiable demands of Latin and Greek. The result is, in many cases, the most curious ignorance of common things. The state of our elementary schools will be considered to-morrow, and I will therefore address myself on the present occasion to secondary schools.

We have all met persons who have taken a university degree, and yet do not understand why the

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moon appears to change its form, who think that corals are insects, whales fish, and bats birds, who do not realise that England has been over and over again below the sea, and still believe that the world is not more than 6,000 years old.

Two great faults in our present system of education are that it is too narrow, and not sufficiently interesting. We cannot all care about grammar, or even about mathematics. Those who love natural science, for instance, find little at school which appeals to them, and even those with literary tastes are surfeited by the monotony of classics; so that comparatively few keep up their studies after leaving school. Thus our system of education too often defeats its own object, and renders odious the very things we wish to make delightful.

Children are inspired with the divine gift of curiosity—sometimes inconveniently so. They ask more questions than the wisest man can answer, and want to know the why and the wherefore of everything. Their minds are bright, eager, and thirsting for knowledge. We send them to school, and what is too often the result? their intellect is dulled, and their interest is crushed out; they may have learnt much, but they have too often lost what is far more important—the wish to learn.

No doubt both Oxford and Cambridge have admirable science schools. A man can study there with many advantages, and under excellent teachers. But the prizes and fellowships are still given mainly to classics and mathematics. Moreover, natural science is not yet regarded as a necessary part of education. Degrees are given without requiring any knowledge of the world in which we live. Our

universities give excellent teaching: they prepare learned specialists, but are places of instruction rather than of education. The most profound classical scholar, if he knows nothing of science, is but a half-educated man after all—a boy in a good elementary school has had a better education. The responsibility rests, as it seems to me, mainly with the universities. The public schools tell us that they must conform to the requirements of the universities, the preparatory schools are governed by the public schools, and hence the tendency is to specialise the education of boys from the very beginning of school life. These are no peculiar views of mine. They have been reiterated by students of education, from Ascham and Milton to Huxley, and they have been urged by one Royal Commission after another.

University authorities seem to consider that the elements of science are in themselves useless. This view appears to depend on a mistaken analogy with language. It is no use to know a little of a number of languages, however well taught, unless indeed one is going into the countries where they are spoken. But it is important to know the rudiments of all sciences, and it is in reality impossible to go far in any one without knowing something of several others. So far as children are concerned, it is a mistake to think of astronomy and physics, geology and biology, as so many separate subjects. For the child, nature is one subject, and the first thing is to lay a broad foundation. We should, as Lord Brougham said, teach our children something of everything, and then, as far as possible, everything of something. Specialisation should not begin before seventeen, or at any rate sixteen.

Every one would admit that it is a poor thing to be a great ichthyologist or botanist unless a man has some general knowledge of the world he lives in, and the same applies to a mathematician or a classical scholar. Before a child is carried far in any one subject, it should at least be explained to him that our earth is one of several planets, revolving round the sun; that the sun is a star; that the solar system is one of many millions occupying the infinite depths of space; he should be taught the general distribution of land and sea, the continents and oceans, the position of England, and of his own parish; the elements of physics, including the use and construction of the thermometer and barometer; the elements of geology and biology. *Pari passu* with these should be taken arithmetic, some knowledge of language, drawing, which is almost, if not quite as important as writing, and perhaps music. When a child has thus acquired some general conception of the world in which we live, it will be time to begin specialising and concentrating his attention on a few subjects.

I submit, then that some study of Nature is an essential part of a complete education; that just as any higher education without mathematics and classics would be incomplete, so without some knowledge of the world we live in, it is also one-sided and unsatisfactory—a half education only.

In the study of natural history, again, we should proceed from the general to the particular. Commence with the characteristics in which animals and plants agree, their general structure, and the necessities of existence. Animals, again, agree together on some points, as regards which they differ from plants.

A general idea should then be given of the principal divisions of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. In many respects, though animals are perhaps more interesting, plants present greater facilities for study. They are easier to find, to handle, and to examine. Specimens of the principal divisions can be more readily obtained and studied; the structure also can be more pleasantly demonstrated. Almost all children are born with a love of natural history and of collecting.

Far be it from me to underrate the pleasure and interest of collecting. Such a collection as the present is most useful. Indeed collections are in many branches of nature-knowledge almost a necessary preliminary to study. But a collection is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is like a library, necessary for study, but useless unless studied, —unless the books are read. Moreover, we have all access to the great National Museum. Still, private collections are in many ways useful, but not of course unless they are used. Moreover, if I confine my remarks to natural history, plants lose half their interest when they are gathered, animals when they are killed.

In the streets and toyshops many ingenious puzzles are sold in which children, and even grown-up people, seem to find great interest and amusement. What are they to the puzzles and problems which Nature offers us without charging even a penny? These are innumerable.

Take geography and biology alone :—

Why are there mountains in Wales and the Lake district?

What determined the course of the Thames?

Why are Cotswolds steep on the north-west and with a gentle slope on the north-east?

What are the relations between the North and South Downs?  
 How did the Thames cut the Goring Gap, and the Medway  
 that through the Chalk ridge?

What is the age of the English Channel?

Why are so many of our midland meadows thrown into  
 ridges and furrows?

Why is Scotland intersected by lines at right angles?

Why are some Scotch lochs so deep?

Why have beeches triangular seeds and sycamores spherical  
 seeds?

Why are beech leaves oval and pointed, and sycamore leaves  
 palmate?

Why are beech leaves entire and oak leaves cut into rounded  
 bays?

Why has the Spanish chestnut long, sword-shaped leaves?

Why have some willows broad leaves, and others narrow  
 leaves?

Why do some flowers sleep by day and others by night?

Why do flowers sleep at all?

Why have so many flowers five petals, and why are so many  
 tubular?

Why are white and light-yellow flowers so generally sweet-  
 scented?

Why are tigers striped, leopards spotted, lions brown, sheep  
 gray, and so many caterpillars green?

Why are some caterpillars so brightly coloured?

Why are fish dark above and pale below?

Why do soles have both eyes on one side?

Why are gulls' eggs more or less pointed and owls' eggs  
 round?

Nature suggests thousands of similar enquiries to  
 those who have eyes to see. Some few we can answer,  
 but the vast majority still remain unexplained.

May I indicate a few subjects of enquiry, confin-  
 ing my suggestions to points which require no elaborate  
 instruments, no appreciable expenditure?

Many people keep pets, but how few study them?  
 Descartes regarded all animals as unconscious auto-  
mata; Huxley thought the matter doubtful; my own

experiments and observations have led me to the conclusion that they have glimmerings of reason, but the subject is still obscure. I have often been told that dogs are as intelligent as human beings, but when I have asked whether any dogs yet realised that 2 and 2 make 4, the answer is doubtful. The whole question of the consciousness and intelligence of animals requires careful study.

Take again the life-history of animals. There is scarcely one which is fully known to us. Really I might say not one, for some of the most interesting discoveries of recent years have been made in respect to some of our commonest animals.

Coming now to plants. Any one who has given a thought to the subject will admit how many problems are opened up by flowers. But leaves and seeds are almost equally interesting. There is a reason for everything in this world, and there must be some cause for the different forms of leaves. In Ruskin's vivid words, "they take all kinds of strange shapes, as if to invite us to examine them. Star-shaped, heart-shaped, spear-shaped, arrow-shaped, fretted, fringed, cleft, furrowed, serrated, sinuated, in whorls, in tufts, in spires, in wreaths, endlessly expressive, deceptive, fantastic, never the same from foot-stalk to blossom, they seem perpetually to tempt our watchfulness and take delight in outstepping our wonder."

Some of these indeed have been explained, but for the differences in the leaves of ferns, for instance, sea-weeds, and many others, no satisfactory suggestion, so far as I know, has yet been offered.

Look again at fruits and seeds, what beauty both of form and colour, and what infinite variety! Even

in nearly allied species, in our common wild geraniums, veronicas, forget-me-nots, etc., no two species have seeds which are identical in size, form, or texture of surface. In fact, the problems which every field and wood, every common and hedgerow, every pond and stream, offer us are endless and most interesting.

But the scientific and intellectual interests are only a part of the charm of Nature.

The æsthetic advantages are inestimable. How much our life owes to the beauty of flowers!

Flowers, says Ruskin, "seem intended for the solace of ordinary humanity. Children love them; quiet, tender, contented, ordinary people love them as they grow; luxurious and disorderly people rejoice in them gathered. They are the cottager's treasure, and in the crowded town mark, as with a little broken fragment of rainbow, the windows of the workers in whose heart rests the covenant of peace." But in the crowded streets, or even in the formal garden, flowers always seem, to me at least, as if they were pining for the freedom of the woods and fields, where they can live and grow as they list.

In times of trouble or anxiety the lover of trees will often feel with Tennyson that

The woods were filled so full of song

There seemed no room for sense of wrong.

I feel with Jefferies that, "by day or by night, summer or winter, beneath trees the heart feels nearer to that depth of life which the far sky means. The rest of spirit found only in beauty, ideal and pure, comes there because the distance seems within touch of thought."

The open air is not a cure for the body only, but for the mind also.

We seem to be on the threshold of great discoveries.

There is no single substance in Nature the properties of which are fully known to us. There is no animal or plant which would not well repay, I do not say merely the attention of an hour, but even the devotion of a lifetime. I often grieve to think how much happiness our fellow-countrymen lose from their ignorance of science. Man, we know, is born to sorrow and suffering, but he is not born to be dull, and no one with any knowledge of science could ever be. If any one is ever dull it is his own fault. Every wood, every field, every garden, every stream, every pond, is full of interest for those who have eyes to see. No one would sit and drink in a public-house, if he knew how delightful it was sit and think in a field; no one would seek excitement in gambling and betting, if he knew how much more interesting science is; that science never ruined any one, but is a sort of fairy godmother ready to shower on us all manner of good gifts if we will only let her. In mediæval fairy tales the nature spirits occasionally fell in love with some peculiarly attractive mortals, and endowed their favourites with splendid presents. But Nature will do all this, and more, for any one who loves her.

If any one, says Seneca, "gave you a few acres, you would say that you had received a benefit; can you deny that the boundless extent of the earth is a benefit? If a house were given you, bright with marble, its roof beautifully painted with colours and gilding, you would call it no small benefit. God has built for you a mansion that fears no fire or ruin... covered with a roof which glitters in one fashion by day, and in another by night. Whence comes the

breath which you draw; the light by which you perform the actions of your life? the blood by which your life is maintained? the meat by which your hunger is appeased? .....The true God has planted not a few oxen, but all the herds on their pastures through the world, and furnished food to all the flocks; He has ordained the alternation of summer and winter.....He has invented so many arts and varieties of voice, so many notes to make music..... We have implanted in us the seeds of all ages, of all arts; and God our Master brings forth our intellects from obscurity."

Lastly, in the troubles and sorrows of life science will do much to soothe, comfort, and console. If we contemplate the immeasurable lapse of time indicated by geology, the almost infinitely small, and quite infinitely complex and beautiful structures rendered visible by the microscope, or the depths of space revealed by the telescope, we cannot but be carried out of ourselves.

A man, said Seneca, " can hardly lift up his eyes towards the heavens without wonder and veneration to see so many millions of radiant lights, and to observe their courses and revolutions." The stars, indeed, if we study them, will not only guide us over the wide waters of the ocean, but what is even more important, light us through the dark hours which all must expect. The study of Nature indeed is not only most important from a practical and material point of view, and not only most interesting, but will also do much to lift us above the petty troubles and help us to bear the greater sorrows of life.

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## Viscount Bryce (born 1888)

### SOME HINTS ON READING\*

*Address to the Students of Rutgers (formerly Queen's)  
College, New Jersey, October, 1911.*

It has been often said that books do for us to-day what universities did in earlier ages. The knowledge that could five centuries ago have been obtained only from the lips of a teacher, can now be gathered from the printed page. Nevertheless, since it is only the most active and most diligent and most discerning minds that can dispense with the help and guidance of teachers to show them what to read and how to read, universities and colleges are scarcely less useful if not quite so indispensable to-day as they were before the invention of printing. It is, therefore, not unfitting that in your college I should be asked to talk to you about books, the way to choose them, and the way to draw most profit from them. The very abundance of books in our days—a stupefying and terrifying abundance—has made it more important to know how to choose promptly and judiciously among them if one is not to spend as much time in the mere choice as in the use. Here you have the help of your professors. But here you are only beginning the process of education which will go on during the rest of your life. By far the largest part

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of that process will, after you have left college, consist in your independent reading, so the sooner you form habits of choice and methods of use, the better.

The first piece of advice I will venture to give you is this: Read only the best books. There are plenty of them, far more than you will ever find time to read, and when they are to be had it is a pity to waste time on any others.

You may ask what I mean by the Best books. Passing by for the moment those which in each of the great world-languages we call its classics, for to these we shall return presently, I mean by the Best those from which you receive most, and can carry most away, in the form either of knowledge or of stimulation. When you want to learn something about a subject, do not fall upon the first book which you have heard named or which professes by its title to deal with that subject. Consult your teacher, or any well-read friend, or the librarian of the nearest public library. (One of the greatest services public libraries render is that they provide librarians usually competent, and I believe always willing, to advise those who apply to them.) Be content with nothing less than the very best you can get. Time will be saved in the end.

There is no waste more pitiable than that so often seen when some zealous student has, for want of guidance, spent weeks or months of toil in trying to obtain from a second or third-rate book what he might have found sooner and better in a first-rate one. So try to read only what is good. And by "good" you will not suppose me to mean what used to be called "improving books," books written in a sort of Sunday School spirit for the moral benefit

of the reader. A book may be excellent in its ethical tone, and full of solid information, and yet be unprofitable, that is to say, dull, heavy, uninspiring, wearisome. Contrariwise, a book is good when it is bright and fresh, when it rouses and enlivens the mind, when it provides materials on which the mind can pleasurably work, when it leaves the reader not only knowing more but better able to use the knowledge he has received from it.

Seventy years ago people, or at least those who used then to be called the preceptors of youth, talked as if there lay a certain virtue in dry books, or at any rate a moral merit in the process of plodding through them. It was a dismal mistake, which inflicted upon youth many a dreary hour. The dull book is not better than the lively book. Other things being equal, it is worse, because it requires more expenditure of effort to master such of its contents as are worth remembering. If the edge of the tool is blunt, one must put forth more strength, and as there is never too much strength, none of it should be wasted. It may be asked, "But is not the mental discipline wholesome?" Yes, effort crowned with victory is a fine thing, but since there is plenty of such discipline to be had from the better books why go to the worse books for it?

Sometimes it happens that what you want to learn cannot be had except from dry or even from dull treatises. Dryness and dulness are not the same thing, for the former quality may be due to the nature of the subject, but the latter is the fault of the author. Well, if there is no other book to be found, you must make the best of the dry and even of the dull. But first make quite sure that there

are none better to be had, for though in many a subject the really satisfactory book has not yet been written, still in most subjects there is a large choice between the better and the worse.

Every book ought to be so composed as to be capable of being read with enjoyment by those who bring interest and capacity to it. One cannot be playfully various and graphically picturesque upon every kind of subject. Once, in a distant British colony, a friend of mine was asked by a person who knew that he came from the University of Oxford, "What do you think of Euclid?" My friend replied that Euclid's "Elements of Geometry"—if that was what the question referred to—was a valuable treatise, whose reputation had been established for many centuries. "Yes," said the questioner, "but what do you think of Euclid's style?" My friend answered that he had always thought more about the substance than about the style of Euclid, but would be glad to know his questioner's opinion. "Well," said the latter, "I consider it quite a good style, but too systematic." Eloquence, variety, and wit are not the particular merits we look for in a scientific treatise, but however dry geometry or any other subject may appear, there is all the difference between a book which is well arranged and well expressed, a book which takes a grip of the mind and affords the pleasure of following out a line of logical thought, and a book which tumbles out facts and ideas in a confused and shapeless heap.

To you undergraduates life now seems a long vista with infinite possibilities. But, if you love learning, you will soon find that life is altogether too short for reading half the good books from which

you would like to cull knowledge. Let not an hour of it be wasted on third-rate or second-rate stuff if first-rate stuff can be had. Goethe once said of some one he knew; "He is a dull man. If he were a book I would not read him." When you find that a book is poor, and does not give you even the bare facts you are in search of, waste no more time upon it.

The immensity of the field of reading suggests another question. Ought a man to read widely, trying to keep abreast of the progress of knowledge and thought in the world at large, or is it better that he should confine himself to a very few subjects, and to proceed not discursively but upon some regular system?

Each alternative has its advantages, but considering how rapidly knowledge is extending itself in all directions, and how every branch of it is becoming specialised, we must recognise that the range of attainment possible three or even two centuries ago is now unattainable even by the most powerful and most industrious minds. To-day the choice lies between superficiality in a larger, and some approach to thoroughness in a smaller, number of topics. Between these alternatives there can be no doubt as to your choice. Every man ought to be thorough in at least one thing, ought to know what exactness and accuracy mean, ought to be capable by his mastery of some one topic of having an opinion that is genuinely his own. So my advice to you would be to direct your reading chiefly to a few subjects, in one at least of which you may hope to make yourself proficient, and as regards other subjects, to be content with doing what you can to

follow the general march of knowledge. You will find it hard—indeed impossible—to follow that march in the physical sciences, unless you start with some special knowledge of one or more of them. Many of the branches into which they have been diverging are now so specialised that the ordinary reader can hardly comprehend the technical terms which modern treatises employ. But as respects travel and history and biography, and similarly as respects economics, the so-called “sociological subjects,” art, and literary criticism, it is possible for a man who husbands his time and spends little of it on newspapers or magazines, to find leisure for the really striking books that are published on some of these topics which lie outside his special tastes. Do not, however, attempt to cover even the striking books on all of such topics. You will only dissipate your forces. Now and then a book appears which everybody ought to read, no matter how far it lies out of his range of study. It may be a brilliant poem. It may be a treatise throwing new light on some current question of home or foreign politics, about which every citizen, because he is a citizen, ought to try to have an opinion. It may be the record of some startling discovery in the realms of archæology, for instance, or in some branch of natural science. But such books are rare; and in particular the epoch-making scientific discoveries are seldom known at the time when the world first hears of them to be really epoch-making.

Two questions may, however, have presented themselves to you. *One is this:* Are there not some indispensable books which every one is bound to read on pain of being deemed to be not an educated man? Certainly there are. Every language has its classics

which those who speak the language ought to have read as part of a liberal education. In our own tongue we have, say, a score of great authors—it would be easy to add another dozen, but I wish to be moderate and put the number as low as possible—of whose works every one of us is bound to have read enough to enable him to appreciate the author's peculiar quality. These of course you must read, though not necessarily all or nearly all they have written. Spenser, for instance, is an English classic, but even so voracious a reader as Macaulay admitted that few could be expected to persevere to the end of the "Faery Queene." Even smaller is the percentage of Dryden's works which a man may feel bound to read. Do not look for an opinion as to the percentage in the case of Robert Browning. The sooner you begin to read those who belong to this score, the better, for most of them are poets, and youth is the season in which to learn to love poetry. If you do not care for it then, you will hardly do so later.

2 The other question is, What about fiction? I can just recall an austere time, more than sixty years ago, when in Britain not a few moralists and educators were disposed to ban novel-reading altogether to young people and to treat it even among their elders as an indulgence almost as dangerous as the use of cards, dice and tobacco. Exceptions, however, were made even by the sternest of these authorities. I recollect that one of them gave his imprimatur to two stories by an estimable Scottish authoress—now long forgotten—named Miss Brunton. These tales were entitled "Discipline" and "Self-Control," and a perusal of them was well fitted to discourage the young reader from indulging any

further his taste for imaginative literature. Permitted fiction being scanty, I did attack "Self-Control," and just got through it, but "Discipline" was too much for me. Fiction is far more read now; being abundant and cheaper, since it comes in the form of magazines as well as in books. But we have no Dickens, no Thackeray, no Hawthorne, no George Eliot.

Need anything more be said about fiction than that we should deal with it just as we should with other kinds of literature? Read the best; that is to say, read that from which you can carry away something that enlarges the range of your knowledge and sets your mind working. A good story, be it a historical romance or a picture of contemporary social conditions, gives something that is worth remembering. It may be a striking type of character, or a view of life and the influences that mould life, presented in a dramatic form. Or perhaps the tale portrays the aspects of society and manners in some other country, or is made a vehicle for an analysis of the heart and for reflections that illuminate some of the dark corners of human nature. Whichever of them it be that a powerful piece of fiction gives, the result is something more than mere transient amusement. Knowledge is increased. Thought is set in motion. New images rise before us. It is an enrichment of the mind to have erected within it a gallery of characters, the creation of imaginative minds, characters who become as real to us as the famous characters of history, to some of us possibly more real. In them we see the universal traits of human nature and learn to know ourselves and those around us better, we comprehend the common temptations and aspirations, the mixture of motives, the

way in which Fortune plays with men. We share the possession of this gallery with other educated men. It is a part of the common stock of the world's wealth.

The danger of becoming so fond of fiction as to care for no other sort of reading, a malady from which some men and more women are said to suffer, will threaten nobody who has formed the habit of reading the kind of fiction I am trying to describe, because he will enjoy no other kind. A boy or girl can usually read any sort of tale be it better or worse written. The story is enough for him. As he grows older and has read more and more of the best writers, his taste becomes more cultivated and exacting. While faults repel him more, merit attracts him more, because he has become more capable of appreciation. At last a poor quality of fiction which is merely commonplace, handling threadbare themes in a hackneyed way, the sort of fiction into which no inventive or reflective thought has gone, comes to bore him. He can no longer read it, because it is too dull or too vapid.


Prose fiction, in its higher forms, cultivates the imagination almost as well as history does, but poetry does this better than either. The pleasures of the imagination are among the highest we can enjoy. Unless, therefore, any one of you is so unlucky as to find no delight in poetry, it will always form a part of your reading. Not much of the highest order has been appearing in these later days in any country, but there is such an abundance from former days that you will never want for plenty to read and no modern language possesses so much poetry of first-rate merit as does our own.

It seems a pity that the old practice of learning a good deal of poetry by heart should be now falling into disuse, for it stored the mind in the early years of life with fine thoughts in fine words and helped to form a taste for style, seeing that style can rise to greater heights of perfection in poetry than in any kind of prose. As to what to read in poetry, there is no need in our day to warn any one against reading too much, and there is little to say about choice, for you will naturally be drawn first to the great and famous classics in our own and other tongues, and they will so form your taste that you will know how to choose among other verse writers. In particular do not omit those few great writers who have attained to a distinctive way of looking at the world as a whole (what the Germans call a *Weltanschauung*), those in whose minds and works human nature in all its varieties, human life in all its aspects, is mirrored. The author, or authors, of the Homeric poems is the earliest example; Goethe is one of the latest, and not all are poets, for Cervantes is among them.

A man who does not care for those whom the judgment of the world has approved, may conclude that the fault is with himself. But it is not always the greatest writers that give the most pleasure. Most of us have some two or three poets not classed in the first rank, perhaps writers whose fame has always been limited, to whom we frequently return because they express thoughts in a way which makes a special appeal to our own minds. Look out for these also, and cherish them when you have found them.

Though diverse wise and learned men have drawn up lists of what they describe as the Best Hundred

Books, it may be doubted whether such lists have any use beyond that of indicating the preferences of their eminent compilers and the use also of recalling to the notice of the modern public some remarkable works which it had nearly forgotten. The truth is that the excellence of a book is not absolute, *i.e.*, the same for all readers alike. but rather is relative to the knowledge and capacities and environment of the particular reader. Many a book of first-rate value to a person prepared by education and special talents to appreciate it is useless to others not so prepared. A more really interesting enquiry is, What are the books that have made most difference to the progress of the world? Such books are a part, and a significant part, of world history, yet some of them would interest comparatively few readers to-day.

 The question of how much time should be devoted to the classics of other countries than our own is too large a one for me to enter on. Enough to say that whoever knows Latin or Greek or Italian or French or German or Spanish or Icelandic, will not need to be told that he ought to be just as anxious to know the masterpieces in those languages as those in his own. The ancient classics in particular give something which no modern literature supplies.

From considering, What to read, let us go on to consider How to read. Here my advice to you would be, Read with a purpose. Bend your mind upon the book. Read it so as to get out of it the best it has to give you. You may accept this advice as applicable to what is read for information, but may think it superfluous if the book is a story or other work read for amusement, because presumably no one will persevere with such a book unless it interests him.

Yet even where the aim is amusement and the book a work of fiction one man may, if he read it in the right way, extract more benefit as well as more pleasure than another would do. If the story is worth reading, it is so because it not only appeals to our curiosity, but also because it pleasurablely stirs our thought.

With ~~other kinds of literature~~, with science or philosophy or history or economics, the worth of the book is to be measured by what you can carry away from it, and that depends mainly on the spirit in which you read. The book, as already observed, must have quality enough to stimulate thought, to give you what is called a mental reaction. But however good the quality, the reaction will not follow unless you address your mind to the subject. The purpose must be either to get something—whether facts or ideas—which you can add to your store of knowledge or else to receive a stimulus which will quicken your own powers of thinking and feeling. These two benefits usually go together. It is not the quantity of reading that counts, but the quantity and the intensity of thought that are evoked. Nothing is gained by skimming over hundreds or thousands of pages of print unless something remains from the process. So if after having honestly applied your intellect to a book you do not find anything you care to carry away, drop it. Either it is not worth further effort, or it may be outside the range of your appreciation.

You will not, however, fancy that all the books you may have to consult deserve careful study. If thoroughness is a virtue to be cultivated, still more is time a thing to be saved. The old maxim, "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well," is less true

than it seems, and has led many people into a lamentable waste of time. Many things are worth doing if you can do them passably well with a little time and effort, which are not worth doing thoroughly if so to do them requires much time and effort.

Time is the measure of everything in life, and every kind of work ought to be adjusted to it. One of the commonest mistakes we all make is spending ourselves on things whose value is below the value of the time they require. Many a book may be worth reading rapidly so as to extract from it the few important facts it contains, and yet be by no means worth a prolonged study. Economise time in reading as in everything else. The adage that Time is Money falls far short of the truth. Time is worth more than money because by its judicious employment more enjoyment can be secured than money can purchase.

One of the less fortunate results of the large amount of matter which the printing-press turns out in our time is the tendency it has bred to read everything hastily and unthinkingly. The man who glances through several newspapers in the morning and two or three magazines in the evening forms the habit of inattention, or, more correctly, half attention. He reads with no intention of remembering anything except what directly and urgently bears upon his own business, and when in the scanty leisure which business and the practice of reading newspapers and magazines leave him, he takes up a book, this habit of half attention prevents him from applying his mind to what he reads; instead of stimulating thought constant reading of this kind deadens it, and the

quantity of reading and the quantity of thinking are apt to be in inverse ratio to one another. To say, "Don't read without thinking," might be deemed to be that useless thing, a Counsel of Perfection; but I may say, "Beware of the reading Habit." It is one of the curses of our age. What is wanted to-day is less printing and less reading, but more thinking. Reading is easy, and thinking hard work, but the one is useless without the other.

You may ask what is the best way of trying so to read books as to be able to retain the best they give up. If the book be one you wish to know with absolute thoroughness, as students at Oxford University were in my time expected to know Aristotle's *Ethics* and the history of Thucydides for our degree examination, you will find it a good plan to read over every day all that you read the day before. At first this is irksome, but it fixes things in your mind and is a saving in the long run. Everybody has his own devices for recording what he deems best in what he reads, but I can recommend that of making very short notes, or references, on the fly leaf (or leaves) at the end and beginning of a volume of the most important facts or views it contains, noting the page on which each occurs, so that one can refer promptly to the things which struck one at the time. Where a work is either of exceptional merit for its fertility in suggestion, or is specially rich in out-of-the-way facts, it may be worth while to bind in additional fly leaves. Should the book be not one's own but borrowed from a friend or a library, one must of course make the notes or references in a MS. note-book, and in that case, since the treatise will not be at hand to refer to, it becomes necessary to make a somewhat fuller abstract of the

facts it is desired to remember. *The advantage of either method is that the process of compressing the fact or view into the fewest possible words helps to fix it in the memory.* I remember cases in which eight or ten entries represented the total results of reading a book of four hundred octavo pages, yet those entries might serve to make some dark things clear.

The late Lord Acton, the most learned man I ever knew, was in the habit of copying out on slips of paper passages or sentences which he thought valuable from all the volumes he perused. He had hundreds of cardboard boxes filled with these slips, the boxes being labelled with the titles of their subjects; and he seemed to know how to lay his hand upon any extract he wanted. Few, however, could hope to bring leisure and industry like his to the accumulation of such a mass of knowledge; and he spent so much time in the process of gathering the opinions of others that he had little left for using them or for giving the world the fruit of his own thoughts, often far better worth having than that which he had plucked from other orchards.

There are those who keep note-books in which they enter the most remarkable facts or aphorisms or statements of doctrine and opinion which they encounter in the course of their reading. For persons fortunate enough to have formed methodical habits this may be a good plan.

Ought reading to be systematic? Should a man lay down a scheme and confine himself to one or more subjects in which he can become proficient rather than spread himself out in superficial sciolism over a large number?

For many of us Life answers this question by requiring attention to be devoted primarily to books which bear upon our occupation or are connected with it. For others again pronounced tastes point out certain lines of reading as those in which they will find most pleasure. Yet there is also a third class whom neither their avocations nor any marked personal preferences guide in any particular direction. My advice to these would be: If you have not got a definite taste ~~try to acquire one~~. Find some pursuit or line of study which you can relish, and give to it most of your spare time. It will be a constant spring of pleasure, an occupation in solitude, a distraction from worries, even a consolation in misfortune, to have something unconnected with one's daily work to which one can turn for change and refreshment of spirit. Some branch of natural history, or some one of the physical sciences, is perhaps the best for this purpose, but any branch of history, or archæology or art (including, as one of the very best, music) will serve. When one has such a pursuit or taste, it naturally becomes the central line which a man's reading follows. In advising a concentration of study upon some few topics, I do not suggest that you should cease to interest yourselves in the general movements of the world. Everyone ought to try to keep abreast of his time, so far at least as not to be ignorant of the great advances that are being made. Of most of these you will not be able to know much, but the more you can know, the better, so long as you do not scatter and dissipate your efforts in such wise as to become a mere smatterer.

There is a maxim which, like that other venerable dictum already referred to, sounds good but has often

done harm. (A book might be written with the title Moral Maxims and the Mischief they Do). You all remember the lines :

A little learning is a dangerous thing ;

Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring.

With all respect to the poet, this is by no means true. A little learning is not dangerous so long as you know that it is little. Danger begins with thinking you know much more than you do. It is not knowledge, be it great or small, but the conceit of knowledge, that misleads men : and the best remedy against this is not ignorance, but the knowing some one thing really well. Thoroughness in one subject enables a man to recognise his scantiness of attainment in other subjects, not to add that to have learnt any one thing well helps him in dealing with whatever else he touches, since he learns to discern more quickly what is essential, and to make sure that his knowledge, even if it remains elementary, is not merely superficial.

Do not be surprised if after advising you to read thoroughly I also advise you to learn to read swiftly. There is no inconsistency, for thoroughness depends not so much on the time spent on a piece of work as upon the intensity wherewith the mind is concentrated upon it. One man will read a book in half as many hours as another, and yet know more of what is in the book ; and this because of his superior power of turning upon it the full stream of his mental energy. Only exceptional minds possess this gift in high measure, as did Macaulay, who read a book so swiftly that he seemed to turn the pages almost without pausing, taking in at one glance all that was in them, and yet carrying away all that was worth remember-

ing. But you can cultivate the gift by practice, and it deserves cultivating, for it means better results with less time spent.

The counsel of swift reading is, of course, applicable only to books which are read chiefly for their facts or their views, not to those whose merit lies largely in their style. It would be folly to gallop through Virgil or Keats or Charles Lamb or Heinrich Heine or Chateaubriand. Not in poetry only must one move deliberately, but also in reading fine and finished prose, where every word has its fitting place in the sentence, and its due effect in calling up subtle associations and in touching, however delicately, the spring of emotion.

Finally, let me suggest that you read with independence. There are various spirits in which a book may be approached. One must not be captious, hunting out mistakes or blemishes. But neither must one submissively assume that the author is always right. No author, however great, is exempt from error. True it is that modesty is always in order, and deference due to writers of established credit. We must take them as likely to be wiser than we are. Nevertheless, if you wish to profit by your reading, do not forget to scrutinise each argument as it is presented, each inference drawn, each maxim delivered, to see if it be justified by the facts. Sound criticism seeks rather to discover and appreciate merits than to note faults; but however ready we may be to admire, we must test our author as we go along, and make sure that the view we accept from him is formed not because he has given it but because he has convinced us that it is correct. As your forefathers said that perpetual vigilance is the

price of freedom, so you may say that it is also the price of learning. In a free country every citizen is responsible for the formation of his opinions, and must take them neither from newspapers nor from platform speeches. So in the domain of knowledge a man will lose half the benefit of his study if he reads in a passively receptive way, neglecting to apply his own judgment. Often he will not be able to test his author. Often when he differs from his author the author will be right, and he wrong in venturing to differ. Nevertheless, such error is better than an indolent acquiescence which brings to bear no independent thought.

To say this is to repeat in different words the remark that the reading which counts is the reading which, in making a man think, stirs and exercises and polishes the edge of his mind. The end of study is not to possess knowledge as a man possesses the coins in his purse, but to make knowledge a part of ourselves, that is, to turn knowledge into thought, as the food we eat is turned into the life-giving and nerve-nourishing blood. It is to have a mind so stored and equipped that it shall be to each man, as to the imprisoned sage, his kingdom, of which no one can deprive him. When you have begun by forming the habit of thinking as you read, and exercising your own judgment freely, though modestly, you will find your footing grow firmer and surer as you advance, and will before long know for yourselves what to read and how to read. Life has few greater pleasures.

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Anatole France (born 1844)

OUR LADY'S JUGGLER \*

In the days of King Louis there was a poor juggler in France, a native of Compiègne, Barnaby by name, who went about from town to town performing feats of skill and strength.

On fair days he would unfold an old worn-out carpet in the public square, and when by means of a jovial address, which he had learned of a very ancient juggler, and which he never varied in the least, he had drawn together the children and loafers, he assumed extraordinary attitudes, and balanced a tin plate on the tip of his nose. At first the crowd would feign indifference.

But when, supporting himself on his hands face downwards, he threw into the air six copper balls, which glittered in the sunshine, and caught them again with his feet; or when throwing himself backwards until his heels and the nape of the neck met, giving his body the form of a perfect wheel, he would juggle in this posture with a dozen knives, a murmur of admiration would escape the spectators, and pieces of money rain down upon the carpet.

Nevertheless, like the majority of those who live by their wits, Barnaby of Compiègne had a great struggle to make a living.

\* From *Mother of Pearl*, translated by Frederick Chapman, by kind permission of the publisher, Mr. John Lane, London.

Earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, he bore rather more than his share of the penalties consequent upon the misdoings of our father Adam.

Again, he was unable to work as constantly as he would have been willing to do. The warmth of the sun and the broad daylight were as necessary to enable him to display his brilliant parts as to the trees if flower and fruit should be expected of them. In winter time he was nothing more than a tree stripped of its leaves, and as it were dead. The frozen ground was hard to the juggler, and, like the grasshopper of which Marie de France tells us, the inclement season caused him to suffer both cold and hunger. But as he was simple-natured he bore his ills patiently.

He had never meditated on the origin of wealth, nor upon the inequality of human conditions. He believed firmly that if this life should prove hard, the life to come could not fail to redress the balance, and this hope upheld him. He did not resemble those thievish and miscreant Merry Andrews who sell their souls to the devil. He never blasphemed God's name; he lived uprightly, and although he had no wife of his own, he did not covet his neighbour's, since woman is ever the enemy of the strong man, as it appears by the history of Samson recorded in the Scriptures.

In truth, his was not a nature much disposed to carnal delights, and it was a greater deprivation to him to forsake the tankard than the Hebe who bore it. For whilst not wanting in sobriety, he was fond of a drink when the weather waxed hot. He was a worthy man who feared God, and was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin.

Never did he fail on entering a church to fall upon his knees before the image of the Mother of God, and offer up this prayer to her :

“ Blessed Lady, keep watch over my life until it shall please God that I die, and when I am dead, ensure to me the possession of the joys of paradise.”

## II

Now on a certain evening after a dreary wet day, as Barnaby pursued his road, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, on the watch for some barn where, though he might not sup, he might sleep, he perceived on the road, going in the same direction as himself, a monk, whom he saluted courteously. And as they walked at the same rate they fell into conversation with one another.

“ Fellow traveller,” said the monk, “ how comes it about that you are clothed all in green? Is it perhaps in order to take the part of a jester in some mystery play?”

“ Not at all, good father,” replied Barnaby. “ Such as you see me, I am called Barnaby, and for my calling I am a juggler. There would be no pleasanter calling in the world if it would always provide one with daily bread.”

“ Friend Barnaby,” returned the monk, “ be careful what you say. There is no calling more pleasant than the monastic life. Those who lead it are occupied with the praises of God, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; and, indeed, religious life is one ceaseless hymn to the Lord.”

Barnaby replied—

“ Good father, I own that I spoke like an ignorant man. Your calling cannot be in any respect compared to mine, and although there may be some merit in dancing with a penny balanced on a stick on the tip of one’s nose, it is not a merit which comes within hail of your own. Gladly would I, like you, good father, sing my office day by day, and especially the office of the most Holy Virgin, to whom I have vowed a singular devotion. In order to embrace the monastic life I would willingly abandon the art by which from Soissons to Beauvais I am well known in upwards of six hundred towns and villages.”

The monk was touched by the juggler’s simplicity, and as he was not lacking in discernment, he at once recognised in Barnaby one of those men of whom it is said in the Scriptures: Peace on earth to men of good will. And for this reason he replied—

“ Friend Barnaby, come with me, and I will have you admitted into the monastery of which I am Prior. He who guided St. Mary of Egypt in the desert set me upon your path to lead you into the way of salvation.”

It was in this manner, then, that Barnaby became a monk. In the monastery into which he was received the religious vied with one another in the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and in her honour each employed all the knowledge and all the skill which God had given him.

The prior on his part wrote books dealing according to the rules of scholarship with the virtues of the Mother of God.

Brother Maurice, with a deft hand copied out these treatises upon sheets of vellum.

Brother Alexander adorned the leaves with delicate miniature paintings. Here were displayed the Queen of Heaven seated upon Solomon's throne, and while four lions were on guard at her feet, around the nimbus which encircled her head hovered seven doves, which are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, namely, of Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Strength, Counsel, Understanding, and Wisdom. For her companions she had six virgins with hair of gold, namely, Humility, Prudence, Seclusion, Submission, Virginity, and Obedience.

At her feet were two little naked figures, perfectly white, in an attitude of supplication. These were souls imploring her all-powerful intercession for their souls' health, and we may be sure not imploring in vain.

Upon another page facing this, Brother Alexander represented Eve, so that the Fall and the Redemption could be perceived at one at the same time—Eve the Wife abased, and Mary the Virgin exalted.

Furthermore, to the marvel of the beholder, this book contained presentments of the Well of Living Waters, the Fountain, the Lily, the Moon, the Sun, and the Garden Enclosed of which the Song of Songs tells us, the Gate of Heaven and the City of God, and all these things were symbols of the Blessed Virgin.

Brother Marbode was likewise one of the most loving children of Mary.

He spent all his days carving images in stone, so that his beard, his eyebrows, and his hair were white with dust, and his eyes continually swollen and weeping; but his strength and cheerfulness were not diminished, although he was now well gone in

years, and it was clear that the Queen of Paradise still cherished her servant in his old age. Marbode represented her seated upon a throne, her brow encircled with an orb-shaped nimbus set with pearls. And he took care that the folds of her dress should cover the feet of her, concerning whom the prophet declared: My beloved is as a garden enclosed.

Sometimes, too, he depicted her in the semblance of a child full of grace, and appearing to say, "Thou art my God, even from my mother's womb."

In the priory, moreover, were poets who composed hymns in Latin, both in prose and verse, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and amongst the company was even a brother from Picardy who sang the miracles of Our Lady in rhymed verse and in the vulgar tongue.

### III

Being a witness of this emulation in praise and the glorious harvest of their labours, Barnaby mourned his own ignorance and simplicity.

"Alas!" he sighed, as he took his solitary walk in the little shelterless garden of the monastery, "wretched wight that I am, to be unable, like my brothers, worthily to praise the Holy Mother of God, to whom I have vowed my whole heart's affection. Alas! alas! I am but a rough man and unskilled in the arts and I can render you in service, blessed Lady, neither edifying sermons, nor treatises set out in order according to rule, nor ingenious paintings, nor statues truthfully sculptured, nor verses whose march is measured to the best of feet. No gift have I, alas!"

After this fashion he groaned and gave himself up to sorrow. But one evening, when the monks were spending their hour of liberty in conversation, he heard one of them tell the tale of a religious man who could repeat nothing other than the Ave Maria. This poor man was despised for his ignorance; but after his death there issued forth from his mouth five roses in honour of the five letters of the name Mary (Marie), and thus his sanctity was made manifest.

Whilst he listened to this narrative Barnaby marvelled yet once again at the loving kindness of the Virgin; but the lesson of that blessed death did not avail to console him, for his heart overflowed with zeal, and he longed to advance the glory of his Lady, who is in heaven.

How to compass this he sought but could find no way, and day by day he became the more cast down, when one morning he awakened filled full with joy, hastened to the chapel, and remained there alone for more than an hour. After dinner he returned to the chapel once more.

And, starting from that moment, he repaired daily to the chapel at such hours as it was deserted, and spent within it a good part of the time which the other monks devoted to the liberal and mechanical arts. His sadness vanished, nor did he any longer groan.

A demeanour so strange awakened the curiosity of the monks.

These began to ask one another for what purpose Brother Barnaby could be indulging so persistently in retreat.

The prior, whose duty it is to let nothing escape him in the behaviour of his children in religion, resolved to keep a watch over Barnaby during his

withdrawals to the chapel. One day, then, when he was shut up there after his custom, the prior, accompanied by two of the older monks, went to discover through the chinks in the door what was going on within the chapel.

They saw Barnaby before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, head downwards, with his feet in the air, and he was juggling with six balls of copper and a dozen knives. In honour of the Holy Mother of God he was performing those feats, which aforetime had won him most renown. Not recognising that the simple fellow was thus placing at the service of the Blessed Virgin his knowledge and skill, the two old monks exclaimed the sacrilege.

The prior was aware how stainless was Barnaby's soul, but he concluded that he had been seized with madness. They were all three preparing to lead him swiftly from the chapel, when they saw the Blessed Virgin descend the steps of the altar and advance to wipe away with a fold of her azure robe the sweat which was dropping from her juggler's forehead.

Then the prior, falling upon his face upon the pavement, uttered these words—

“Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God.”

“Amen!” responded the old brethren and kissed the ground.

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James Lane Allen (born 1849)

POSTHUMOUS FAME; OR, A LEGEND OF  
THE BEAUTIFUL \*

I

There once lived in a great city, where the dead were all but innumerable, a young man by the name of Nicholas Vane, who possessed a singular genius for the making of tombstones. So beautiful they were, and so fitly designed to express the shadowy pain of mortal memory or the bright forecasting of eternal hope, that all persons were held fortunate who could secure them for the calm resting-places of their beloved sleepers. Indeed, the curious tale was whispered round that the bereft were not his only patrons, but that certain personages who were peculiarly ambitious of posthumous fame—seeing they had not long to live, and unwilling to intrust others with the grave responsibility of having them commemorated—had gone to his shop and secretly advised with him respecting such monuments as might preserve their memories from too swift oblivion.

However this may fall out, certain it is that his calling had its secrets; and once he was known to observe that no man could ever understand the human heart until he had become a maker of tombstones.

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Whether the knowledge thus derived should make of one a laughing or a weeping philosopher, Nicholas himself remained a joyous type of youthful manhood—so joyous, in fact, that a friend of his who wrought in colour, strolling one day into the workshop where Nicholas stood surrounded by the exquisite shapes of memorial marbles, had asked to paint the scene as a representation of Life chiselling to its beautiful purposes the rugged symbols of Death, and smiling as it wove the words of love and faith across the stony proofs of the universal tragedy. Afterwards, it is true, a great change was wrought in the young artisan.

He had just come in one morning and paused to look around at the various finished and unfinished mortuary designs.

“Truly,” he said to himself all at once, “if I were a wise man, I’d begin this day’s business by chiselling my own head-stone. For who knows but that before sunset my brother the grave-digger may be told to build me one of the houses that last till doomsday! And what man could then make the monument to stop the door of *my* house with? But why should I have a monument? If I lie beneath it, I shall not know I lie there. If I lie not there, then it will not stand over me. So, whether I lie there, or lie not there, what will it matter to me then? Aye; but what if, being dead only to this world and living in another, I should yet look on the monument erected to my memory and therefore be the happier? I know not; nor to what end we are vexed with this desire to be remembered after death. The prospect of vanishing from a poor, toilsome life fills us with such consternation and pain! It is therefore we

strive to impress ourselves ineffaceably on the race, so that, after we have gone hence, or ceased to be, we may still have incorporeal habitation among all coming generation."

Here he was interrupted by a low knock at the door. Bidden to come in, there entered a man of delicate physiognomy, who threw a hurried glance around and inquired in an anxious tone:

"Sir, are you alone?"

"I am never alone," replied Nicholas in a ringing voice; "for I dwell hard by the gate-way of life and death, through which a multitude is always passing."

"Not so loud, I beseech you," said the visitor, stretching forth his thin, white hands with eager deprecation. "I would not, for the world, have any one discover that I have been here."

"Are you, then, a personage of such importance to the world?" said Nicholas, smiling, for the stranger's appearance argued no worldly consideration whatsoever. The suit of black, which his frail figure seemed to shrink away from with very sensitiveness, was glossy and pathetic with more than one convert patch. His shoes were dust-covered and worn. His long hair went round his head in a swirl, and he bore himself with an air of damaged, apologetic, self-appreciation.

"I am a poet," he murmured with a flush of pain, dropping his large mournful eyes beneath the scrutiny of one who might be an unsympathetic listener. "I am a poet, and I have come to speak with you privately of my—of the—of a monument. I am afraid I shall be forgotten. It is a terrible thought."

"Can you not trust your poems to keep you remembered?" asked Nicholas, with more kindness.

"I could if they were as widely read as they should be." He appeared emboldened by his hearer's gentleness. "But, to confess the truth, I have not been accepted by my age. That, indeed, should give me no pain, since I have not written for it, but for the great future to which alone I look for my fame."

"Then why not look to it for your monument also?"

"Ah, sir!" he cried, "there are so many poets in the world that I might be entirely overlooked by posterity, did there not descend to it some sign that I was held in honour by my own generation."

"Have you never noticed," he continued, with more earnestness, "that when strangers visit a cemetery they pay no attention to the thousands of little head-stones that lie scattered close to the ground, but hunt out the highest monuments, to learn in whose honour they were erected? Have you never heard them exclaim: 'Yonder is a great monument! A great man must be buried there. Let us go and find out who he was and what he did to be so celebrated.' Oh, sir, you and I know that this is a poor way of reasoning, since the greatest monuments are not always set over the greatest men: Still the custom has wrought its good effects, and splendid memorials do serve to make known in years to come those whom they commemorate, by inciting posterity to search for their actions or revive their thoughts. I warrant you the mere bust of Homer—"

"You are not mentioning yourself in the same breath with Homer, I hope," said Nicholas, with great good-humour.

"My poems are as dear to me as Homer's were to him," replied the poet, his eyes filling.

"What if you *are* forgotten? Is it not enough for the poet to have lived for the sake of beauty?"

"No!" he cried, passionately. "What you say is a miserable error. For the very proof of the poet's vocation is in creating the beautiful. But how know he has created it? By his own mind? Alas, the poet's mind tells him only what is beautiful to *him*! It is by fame that he knows it—fame, the gratitude of men for the beauty he has revealed to them! What is so sweet, then, as the knowledge that fame has come to him already, or surely awaits him after he is dead?"

"We labour under some confusion of ideas, I fear," said Nicholas, "and, besides, are losing time. What kind of men—"

"That I leave to you," interrupted the poet. "Only, I should like my monument to be beautiful. Ah, if you but knew how all through this poor life of mine I have loved the beautiful! Never, never have I drawn near it in any visible form without almost holding my breath as though I were looking deep, deep into God's opened eyes. But it was of the epitaph I wished to speak."

Hereupon, with a deeper flush, he drew from a large inside breast-pocket, that seemed to have been made for the purpose, a worn duodecimo volume, and fell to turning the much-fingered pages.

"This," he murmured fondly, without looking up, "is the complete collection of my poems."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Nicholas, with deep compassion.

"Yes, my complete collection. I have written a great deal more, and should have liked to publish all

that I have written. But it was necessary to select, and I have included here only what it was intolerable to see wasted. There is nothing I value more than a group of elegiac poems, which every single member of my large family—who are fine critics—and all my friends, pronounce very beautiful. I think it would be a good idea to inscribe a selection from one on my monument, since those who read the selection would wish to read the entire poem, and those who read the entire poem would wish to read the entire collection. I shall now favour you with these elegies."

"I should be happy to hear them; but my time!" said Nicholas, courteously. "The living are too impatient to wait on me; the dead too patient to be defrauded."

"Surely you would not refuse to hear one of them," exclaimed the poet, his eyes flashing.

"Read *one*, by all means." Nicholas seated himself on a monumental lamb.

The poet passed one hand gently across his forehead, as though to brush away the stroke of rudeness; then, fixing upon Nicholas a look of infinite remoteness, he read as follows:

"He suffered but he murmured not;  
To every storm he bared his breast;  
He asked but for the highest lot:  
To be a bard above the rest."

"If you ask but for the common lot," interrupted Nicholas, "you should rest content to be forgotten."

But before the poet could reply, a loud knock caused him to flap the leaves of the "Complete Collection" together with one hand, while with the other he gathered the tails of his long coat about him, as

though preparing to pass through some difficult aperture. The exaltation of his mood, however, still showed itself in the look and tone of proud condescension with which he said to Nicholas :

“ Permit me to retire at once by some private passway.”

Nicholas led him to a door in the rear of the shop, and there, with a smile and a tear, stood for a moment watching the precipitate figure of the retreating bard, who suddenly paused when disappearing and tore open the breast of his coat to assure himself that his beloved elegies were resting safe across his heart.

The second visitor was of another sort. He hobbled on a cork leg, but inexorably disciplined the fleshy one into old-time firmness and precision. A faded military cloak draped his stalwart figure. Part of one bushy gray eyebrow had been chipped away by the same sword-cut that left its scar across his battle-beaten face.

“ I have come to speak with you about my monument,” he said in a gruff voice that seemed to issue from the mouth of a rusty cannon. “ Those of my old comrades that did not fall at my side are dead. My wife died long ago, and my little children. I am old and forgotten. It is a time of peace. There’s not a boy who will now listen to me while I tell of my campaigns. I live alone. Were I to die to-morrow my grave might not have so much as a headstone. It might be taken for that of a coward. Make me a monument of a true soldier.”

“ Your grateful country will do that,” said Nicholas.

“ Ha?” exclaimed the veteran, whom the shock of battle had made deaf long ago.

“Your country,” shouted Nicholas, close to his ear, “your country—will erect a monument—to your memory.”

“My country!” The words were shot out with a reverberating, melancholy boom. “My country will do no such a thing. How many millions of soldiers have fallen on her battle-fields! Where are their monuments? They would make her one vast cemetery.”

“But is it not enough for you to have been a true soldier? Why wish to be known and remembered for it?”

“I know I do not wish to be forgotten,” he replied, simply. “I know I take pleasure in the thought that long after I am forgotten there will be a tongue in my monument to cry out to every passing stranger, ‘Here lies the body of a true soldier.’ It is a great thing to be brave!”

“Is, then, this monument to be erected in honour of bravery, or of yourself?”

“There is no difference,” said the veteran, bluntly. “Bravery is myself.”

“It is bravery,” he continued, in husky tones, and with a mist gathering in his eyes that made him wink as though he were trying to see through the smoke of battle—“it is bravery that I see most clearly in the character of God. What would become of us if he were a coward? I serve him as my brave commander; and though I am stationed far from him and may be faint and sorely wounded, I know that he is somewhere on the battle-field, and that I shall see him at last, approaching me as he moves up and down among the ranks.”

“ But you say that your country does not notice you—that you have no friends ; do you, then, feel no resentment ? ”

“ None, none, ” he answered quickly, though his head dropped on his bosom.

“ And you wish to be remembered by a world that is willing to forget you ? ”

He lifted his head proudly. “ There are many true men in the world, ” he said, “ and it has much to think of. I owe it all I can give, all I can bequeath ; and I can bequeath it nothing but the memory of a true man. ”

One day, not long after this, there came into the workshop of Nicholas a venerable man of the gravest, sweetest, and most scholarly aspect, who spoke not a word until he had led Nicholas to the front window and pointed a trembling finger at a distant church-spire.

“ You see yon spire ? ” he said. “ It almost pierces the clouds. In the church beneath I have preached to men and women for nearly fifty years. Many that I have christened at the font I have married at the altar ; many of these I have sprinkled with dust. What have I not done for them in sorrow and want ! How have I not toiled to set them in the way of purer pleasures and to anchor their tempest-tossed hopes ! And yet how soon they will forget me ! Already many say I am too old to preach. Too old ! I preach better than I ever did in my life. Yet it may be my lot to wander down into the deep valley, an idle shepherd with an idle crook. I have just come from the writing of my next sermon, in which I exhort my people to strive that their names be not written on earthly monuments or human hearts, but in the Book of Life.

It is my sublimest theme. If I am ever eloquent, if I am ever persuasive, if I ever for one moment draw aside to spiritual eyes the veil that discloses the calm, enrapturing vistas of eternity, it is when I measure my finite strength against this mighty task. But why? Because they are the sermons of my own aspiration. I preach them to my own soul. Face to face with that naked soul I pen those sermons—pen them when all are asleep save the sleepless Eye that is upon me. Even in the light of that Eye do I recoil from the thought of being forgotten. How clearly I foresee it! Ashes to ashes, dust to dust! Where then will be my doctrines, my prayers, my sermons?"

"Is it not enough for you to have scattered your handful of good broadcast, to ripen as endlessly as the grass? What if they that gather know naught of him that sowed?"

"It is not enough. I should like the memory of me to live on and on in the world, inseparable from the good I may have done. What am I but the good that is in me? 'Tis this that links me to the infinite and the perfect. Does not the Perfect One wish his goodness to be associated with his name? No! No! I do not wish to be forgotten!"

"It is mere vanity."

"Not vanity," said the aged servitor, meekly. "Wait until you are old, till the grave is at your helpless feet: it is the love of life."

But some years later there befell Nicholas an event that transcended all past experiences, and left its impress on his whole subsequent life.

## II

The hour had passed when any one was likely to

enter his shop. A few rays of pale sunlight, straggling in through crevices of the door, rested like a dying halo on the heads of the monumental figures grouped around. Shadows, creeping upward from the ground, shrouded all else in thin, penetrable half-gloom, through which the stark gray emblems of mortality sent forth more solemn suggestions. A sudden sense of the earthly tragedy overwhelmed him. The chisel and the hammer dropped from his hands and, resting his head on the block he had been carving, he gave himself up to that mood of dim, distant reverie in which the soul seems to soar and float far above the shock and din of the world's disturbing nearness. On his all but oblivious ear, like the faint washings of some remote sea, beat the waves of the city's tide-driven life in the streets outside. The room itself seemed hushed to the awful stillness of the high aerial spaces. Then all at once this stillness was broken by a voice, low, clear, and tremulous, saying close to his ear ;

“ Are you the maker of gravestones ? ”

“ That is my sad calling,” he cried, bitterly, starting up with instinctive forebodings.

He saw before him a veiled figure. To support herself, she rested one hand on the block he had been carving, while she pressed the other against her heart, as though to stifle pain.

“ Whose monument is this ? ”

“ A neglected poet's who died not long ago. Soon, perhaps, I shall be making one for an old soldier, and one for a holy man, whose soul, I hear, is about to be dismissed.”

“ Are not some monuments sadder to make than others ? ”

“ Aye, truly.”

“ What is the saddest you ever made?”

“ The saddest monument I ever made was one for a poor mother who had lost her only son. One day a woman came in who had no sooner entered than she sat down and gave way to a passionate outburst of grief.”

“ ‘ My good woman,’ I said, ‘ why do you weep so bitterly?’

“ ‘ Do not call me good,’ she moaned, and hid her face.

“ I then perceived her fallen character. When she recovered self-control she drew from her sinful bosom an old purse filled with coins of different values.

“ ‘ Why do you give me this?’ I asked.

“ ‘ It is to pay for a monument for my son,’ she said, and the storm of her grief swept over her again.

“ I learned that for years she had toiled and starved to hoard up a sum with which to build a monument to his memory, for he had never failed of his duty to her after all others had cast her out. Certainly he had his reward, not in the monument, but in the repentance which came to her after his death. I have never seen such sorrow for evil as the memory of his love wrought in her. For herself she desired only that the spot where she should be buried might be unknown. This longing to be forgotten has led me to believe that none desire to be remembered for the evil that is in them, but only for some truth, or beauty, or goodness by which they have linked their individual lives to the general life of the race. Even the lying epitaphs in cemeteries prove how we would fain have the dead arrayed on the side of right in the thoughts of their survivors. This

wretched mother and human outcast, believing herself to have lost everything that makes it well to be remembered, craved only the mercy of forgetfulness."

"And yet I think she died a Christian soul."

"You knew her, then?"

"I was with her in her last hours. She told me her story. She told me also of you, and that you would accept nothing for the monument you were at such care to make. It is perhaps for this reason that I have felt some desire to see you, and that I am here now to speak with you of—"

A shudder passed over her.

"After all, that was not a sad, but a joyous monument to fashion," she added, abruptly.

"Aye, it was joyous. But to me the joyous and the sad are much allied in the things of this life."

"And yet there might be one monument wholly sad, might there not?"

"There might be, but I know not whose it would be."

"If she you love should die, would not hers be so?"

"Until I love, and she I love is dead, I cannot know," said Nicholas, smiling.

"What builds the most monuments?" she asked, quickly, as though to retreat from her levity.

"Pride builds many—splendid ones. Gratitude builds some, forgiveness some and pity some. But faith builds more than these, though often poor, humble ones; and love!—love builds more than all things else together."

"And what, of all things that monuments are built in memory of, is most loved and soonest forgotten?" she asked, with intensity.

“Nay, I cannot tell that.”

“Is it not a beautiful woman? This, you say, is the monument of a poet. After the poet grows old, men love him for the songs he sang; they love the old soldier for the battles he fought, and the preacher for his remembered prayers. But a woman! Who loves her for the beauty she once possessed, or rather regards her not with the more distaste? Is there in history a figure so lonely and despised as that of the woman who, once the most beautiful in the world, crept back into her native land a withered hag? Or, if a woman die while she is yet beautiful, how long is she remembered? Her beauty is like heat and light—powerful only for those who feel and see it.”

But Nicholas had scarcely heard her. His eyes had become riveted upon her hand, which rested on the marble, as white as though grown out of it under the labours of his chisel.

“My lady,” he said, with the deepest respect, “will you permit me to look at your hand? I have carved many a one in marble, and studied many a one in life; but never have I seen anything so beautiful as yours.”

He took it with an artist’s impetuosity and bent over it, laying its palm against one of his own and stroking it softly with the other. The blood leaped through his heart, and he suddenly lifted it to his lips.

“God only can make the hand beautiful,” he said.

Displaced by her arm which he had upraised, the light fabric that had concealed her figure parted on her bosom and slipped to the ground. His eyes swept over the perfect shape that stood revealed. The veil

still concealed her face. The strangely mingled emotions that had been deepening within him all this time now blended themselves in one irrepressible wish.

“Will you permit me to see your face?”

She drew quickly back. A subtle pain was in his voice as he cried :

“Oh, my lady! I ask it as one who has pure eyes for the beautiful.”

“My face belongs to my past. It has been my sorrow; it is nothing now.”

“Only permit me to see it!”

“Is there no other face you would rather see?”

Who can fathom the motive of a woman's questions?

“None, none!”

She drew aside her veil, and her eyes rested quietly on his like a revelation. So young she was as hardly yet to be a woman, and her beauty had in it that seraphic purity and mysterious pathos which is never seen in a woman's face until the touch of another world has chastened her spirit into the resignation of a saint. The heart of Nicholas was wrung by the sight of it with a sudden sense of inconsolable loss and longing.

“Oh, my lady!” he cried, sinking on one knee and touching his lips to her hand with greater gentleness. “Do you indeed think the beauty of a woman so soon forgotten? As long as I live, yours will be as fresh in my memory as it was the moment after I first saw it in its perfection and felt its power.”

“Do not recall to me the sorrow of such thoughts.” She touched her heart. “My heart is a tired hour-glass. Already the sands are well nigh run through. Any hour it may stop, and then— out like

a light! Shapeless ashes! I have loved life well, but not so well that I have not been able to prepare to leave it."

She spoke with the utmost simplicity and calmness, yet her eyes were turned with unspeakable sadness towards the shadowy recesses of the room, where from their pedestals the monumental figures looked down upon her as though they would have opened their marble lips and said, "Poor child! Poor child!"

"I have had my wish to see you and to see this place. Before long some one will come here to have you carve a monument to the most perishable of all things. Like the poor mother who had no wish to be remembered—"

Nicholas was moved to the deepest.

"I have but little skill," he said. "The great God did not bestow on me the genius of his favourite children of sculpture. But if so sad and sacred a charge should ever become mine, with his help I will rear such a monument to your memory that as long as it stands none who see it will ever be able to forget you. Year after year your memory shall grow as a legend of the beautiful."

When she was gone he sat self-forgetful until the darkness grew impenetrable. As he groped his way out at last along the thick guide-posts of death, her voice seemed to float towards him from every headstone, her name to be written in every epitaph.

The next day a shadow brooded over the place. Day by day it deepened. He went out to seek intelligence of her. In the quarter of the city where she lived he discovered that her name had already become a nucleus around which were beginning to cluster

many little legends of the beautiful. He had but to hear recitals of her deeds of kindness and mercy. For the chance of seeing her again he began to haunt the neighbourhood; then, having seen her, he would return to his shop the victim of more unavailing desire. All things combined to awake in him that passion of love whose roots are nourished in the soul's finest soil of pity and hopelessness. Once or twice, under some pretext, he made bold to accost her; and once, under the stress of his passion, he mutely lifted his eyes, confessing his love; but hers were turned aside.

Meantime he began to dream of the monument he chose to consider she had committed to his making. It should be the triumph of his art; but more, it would represent in stone the indissoluble union of his love with her memory. Through him alone would she enter upon her long after-life of saint-like reminiscence.

When the tidings of her death came, he soon sprang up from the prostration of his grief with a burning desire to consummate his beloved work.

“Year after year your memory shall grow as a legend of the beautiful.”

These words now became the inspiration of his masterpiece. Day and night it took shape in the rolling chaos of his sorrow. What sculptor in the world ever espoused the execution of a work that lured more irresistibly from their hiding-places the shy and tender ministers of his genius? What one ever explored with greater boldness the utmost limits of artistic expression, or wrought in sterner defiance of the laws of our common forgetfulness?

## III

One afternoon, when people thronged the great cemetery of the city, a strolling group were held fascinated by the unique loveliness of a newly erected monument.

"Never," they exclaimed, "have we seen so exquisite a masterpiece. In whose honour is it erected?"

But when they drew nearer, they found carved on it simply a woman's name.

"Who was she?" they asked, puzzled and disappointed. "Is there no epitaph?"

"Aye," spoke up a young man lying on the grass and eagerly watching the spectators. "Aye, a very fitting epitaph."

"Where is it?"

"Carved on the heart of the monument!" he cried, in a tone of triumph.

"On the heart of the monument? Then we cannot see it."

"It is not meant to be seen."

"How do *you* know of it?"

"I made the monument."

"Then tell us what it is."

"It cannot be told. It is there only because it is unknown."

"Out on you! You play your pranks with the living and the dead."

"You will live to regret this day," said a thoughtful by-stander. "You have tampered with the memory of the dead."

"Why, look you, good people," cried Nicholas, springing up and approaching his beautiful master-work. He rested one hand lovingly against it and

glanced around him pale with repressed excitement, as though a long-looked-for moment had at length arrived. "I play no pranks with the living or the dead. Young as I am, I have fashioned many monuments, as this cemetery will testify. But I make no more. This is my last; and as it is the last, so it is the greatest. For I have fashioned it in such love and sorrow for her, who lies beneath it as you can never know. If it is beautiful, it is yet an unworthy emblem of that brief and transporting beauty which was hers; and I have planted it here beside her grave, that as a delicate white flower it may exhale the perfume of her memory for centuries to come.

"Tell me," he went on, his lips trembling, his voice faltering with the burden of oppressive hope—"tell me, you who behold it now, do you not wed her memory deathlessly to it? To its fair shape, its native and unchanging purity?"

"Aye," they interrupted, impatiently. "But the epitaph?"

"Ah!" he cried, with tenderer feeling, "beautiful as the monument is to the eye, it would be not fit emblem of her had it not something sacred hidden within. For she was not lovely to the sense alone, but had a perfect heart. So I have placed within the monument that which is its heart and typifies hers. And, mark you!" he cried, in a voice of such awful warning that those standing nearest him instinctively shrank back, "the one is as inviolable as the other. No more could you rend the heart from the human bosom than this epitaph from the monument. My deep and lasting curse on him who attempts it! For I have so fitted the parts of the

work together, that to disunite would be to break them in pieces; and the inscription is so fragile and delicately poised within, that so much as rudely to jar the monument would shiver it to atoms. It is put there to be inviolable. Seek to know it, you destroy it. This I but create after the plan of the Great Artist, who shows you only the fair outside of his masterpieces. What human eye ever looked into the mysterious heart of his beautiful—that heart which holds the secret of inexhaustible freshness and eternal power? Could this epitaph have been carved on the outside, you would have read it and forgotten it with natural satiety. But uncomprehended, what a spell I mark it exercises! You will—nay, you *must*—remember it for ever! You will speak of it to others. They will come. And thus in ever-widening circle will be borne afar the memory of her whose name is on it, the emblem of whose heart is hidden within. And what more fitting memorial could a man rear to a woman, the pure shell of whose beauty all can see, the secret of whose beautiful being no one ever comprehends?"

He walked rapidly away, then, some distance off, turned and looked back. More spectators had come up. Some were earnestly talking, pointing now to the monument, now towards him. Others stood in rapt contemplation of his master-work.

Tears rose to his eyes. A look of ineffable joy overspread his face.

"Oh, my love!" he murmured, "I have triumphed. Death has claimed your body, heaven your spirit; but the earth claims the saintly memory of each. This day about your name begins to grow the Legend of the Beautiful."

The sun had just set. The ethereal white shape of the monument stood outlined against a soft background of rose-coloured sky. To his transfiguring imagination it seemed lifted far into the cloud-based heavens, and the evening star, resting above its apex, was a celestial lamp lowered to guide the eye to it through the darkness of the descending night.

## IV

Mysterious complexity of our mortal nature and estate that we should so desire to be remembered after death, though born to be forgotten! Our words and deeds, the influences of our silent personalities, do indeed pass from us into the long history of the race and abide for the rest of time: so that an earthly immortality is the heritage, nay, the inalienable necessity, of even the commonest lives; only it is an immortality not of self, but of its good and evil. For Nature sows us and reaps us, that she may gather a harvest, not of us, but from us. It is God alone that gathers the harvest of us. And well for us that our destiny should be that general forgetfulness we so strangely shrink from. For no sooner are we gone hence than, even for such brief times as our memories may endure, we are apt to grow by processes of accumulative transformation into what we never were. Thou kind, kind fate, therefore—never enough named and celebrated—that biddest the sun of memory rise on our finished but imperfect lives, and then lengthenest or shortenest the little day of posthumous reminiscence, according as thou seest there is need of early twilight or of deeper shadows!

Years passed. City and cemetery were each grown vaster. It was again an afternoon when the

people strolled among the graves and monuments. An old man had courteously attached himself to a group that stood around a crumbling memorial. He had reached a great age ; but his figure was erect, his face animated by strong emotions, and his eyes burned beneath his brows.

"Sirs," said he, interposing in the conversation, which turned wholly on the monument, "you say nothing of him in whose honour it was erected."

"We say nothing because we know nothing."

"Is he then wholly forgotten?"

"We are not aware that he is at all remembered."

"The inscription reads : 'He was a poet.' Know you none of his poems?"

"We have never so much as heard of his poems."

"My eyes are dim ; is there nothing carved beneath his name?"

One of the by-standers went up and knelt down close to the base.

"There *was* something here, but it is effaced by time—Wait!" And tracing his finger slowly along, he read like a child :

"He—asked—but—for—the—highest—lot."

"That is all," he cried, springing lightly up. "Oh, the dust on my knees!" he added with vexation.

"He may have sung very sweetly," pursues the old man.

"He may, indeed!" they answered, carelessly.

"But, sirs," continued he, with a sad smile, "perhaps you are the very generation that he looked to for the fame which his own denied him ; perhaps he died believing that *you* would fully appreciate his poem."

"If so, it was a comfortable faith to 'die in,'" they said, laughing, in return. "He will never know that we did not. A few great poets have posthumous fame; we know *them* well enough." And they passed on.

"This," said the old man, as they paused elsewhere, "seems to be the monument of a true soldier; know you aught of the victories he helped to win?"

"He may not have helped to win any victories. He may have been a coward. How should we know? Epitaphs often lie. The dust is peopled with soldiers." And again they moved on.

"Does any one read his sermons now, know you?" asked the old man as they paused before a third monument.

"Read his sermons!" they exclaimed, laughing more heartily. "Are sermons so much read in the country you come from? See how long he has been dead! What should the world be thinking of, to be reading his musty sermons?"

"At least does it give you no pleasure to read He was a good man?" inquired he, plaintively.

"Aye; but if he was good, was not his goodness its own reward?"

"He may have also wished long to be remembered for it."

"Naturally; but we have not heard that his wish was gratified."

"Is it not sad that the memory of so much beauty and truth and goodness in our common human life should perish? But, sirs,"—and here the old man spoke with sudden energy—"if there should be one who combined perfect beauty and truth and goodness

in one form and character, do you not think such a rare being would escape the common fate and be long and widely remembered?"

"Doubtless."

"Sirs," said he, quickly stepping in front of them with flashing eyes, "is there in all this vast cemetery not a single monument that has kept green the memory of the being in whose honour it was erected?"

"Aye, aye," they answered, readily. "Have you not heard of it?"

"I am but come from distant countries. Many years ago I was here, and have journeyed hither with much desire to see the place once more. Would you kindly show me this monument?"

"Come!" they answered, eagerly, starting off. "It is the best known of all the thousands in the cemetery. None who see it can ever forget it."

"Yes, yes!" murmured the old man. "That is why I have—I foresaw—Is it not a beautiful monument? Does it not lie—in what direction does it lie?"

A feverish eagerness seized him. He walked now beside, now before, his companions. Once he wheeled on them.

"Sirs, did you not say it perpetuates the memory of her—of the one—who lies beneath it?"

"Both are famous. The story of this woman and her monument will never be forgotten. It is impossible to forget it."

"Year after year—" muttered he brushing his hand across his eyes.

They soon came to a spot where the aged branches of memorial evergreens interwove a sunless canopy, and spread far around a drapery of gloom through which the wind passed with an unending sigh.

Brushing aside the lowest boughs, they stepped in awe-stricken silence within the dank, chill cone of shade. Before them rose the shape of a gray monument, at sight of which the aged traveller, who had fallen behind, dropped his staff and held out his arms as though he would have embraced it. But, controlling himself, he stepped forward, and said, in tones of thrilling sweetness :

“Sirs, you have not told me what story is connected with this monument that it should be so famous. I conceive it must be some very touching one of her whose name I read—some beautiful legend—”

“Judge you of that!” interrupted one of the group, with a voice of stern sadness and not without a certain look of mysterious horror. “They say this monument was reared to a woman by the man who once loved her. She was very beautiful, and so he made her a very beautiful monument. But she had a heart so hideous in its falsity that he carved in stone an enduring curse on her evil memory, and hung it in the heart of the monument because it was too awful for any eye to see. But others tell the story differently. They say the woman not only had a heart false beyond description, but was in person the ugliest of her sex. So that while the hidden curse is a lasting execration of her nature, the beautiful exterior is a masterpiece of mockery which her nature, and not her ugliness, maddened his sensitive genius to perpetrate. There can be no doubt that this is the true story, as hundreds tell it now, and that the woman will be remembered so long as the monument stands—aye, and longer—not only for her loathsome—Help the old man!”

He had fallen backward to the ground. They tried in vain to set him on his feet. Stunned, speechless, he could only raise himself on one elbow and turn his eyes towards the monument with a look of preternatural horror, as though the lie had issued from its treacherous shape. At length he looked up to them, as they bent kindly over him, and spoke with much difficulty :

"Sirs, I am an old man—a very old man, and very feeble. Forgive this weakness. And I have come a long way, and must be faint. While you were speaking my strength failed me. You were telling me a story—were you not?—the story—the legend of a most beautiful woman, when all at once my senses grew confused and I failed to hear you rightly. Then my ears played me such a trick ! Oh, sirs ! if you but knew what a damnable trick my ears played me, you would pity me greatly, very, very greatly. This story touches me. It is much like one I seemed to have heard for many years, and that I have been repeating over and over to myself until I love it better than my life. If you would but go over it again—carefully—very carefully."

"My God, sirs !" he exclaimed, springing up with the energy of youth when he had heard the recital a second time, "tell me *who* who started this story ! Tell me *how* and *where* it began !"

"We cannot. We have heard many tell it, and not all alike."

"And do they—do you—believe—it is—true?" he asked, helplessly.

"We all *know* it is true ; do not *you* believe it?"

“ I can never forget it ! ” he said, in tones quickly grown harsh and husky. “ Let us go away from so pitiful a place. ”

It was near nightfall when he returned, unobserved, and sat down beside the monument as one who had ended a pilgrimage.

“ They all tell me the same story, ” he murmured, wearily. “ Ah, it was the hidden epitaph that wrought the error ! But for it, the sun of her memory would have had its brief, befitting day and tender sitting. Presumptuous folly, to suppose they would understand my masterpiece, when they so often misconceive the hidden heart of His beautiful works, and convert the uncomprehended good and true into a curse of evil ! ”

The night fell. He was awaiting it. Nearer and nearer rolled the dark, suffering heart of a storm ; nearer towards the calm, white breasts of the dead. Over the billowy graves the many-footed winds suddenly fled away in a wild, tumultuous cohort. Overhead, great black bulks swung heavily at one another across the tremulous stars.

Of all earthly spots, where does the awful discord of the elements seem so futile and theatric as in a vast cemetery ? Blow, then, winds, till you uproot the trees ! Pour, floods, pour till the water trickles down into the face of the pale sleeper below ! Rumble and flash, ye clouds, till the earth trembles and seems to be aflame ! But not a lock of hair, so carefully put back over the brows, is tossed or disordered. The sleeper has not stretched forth an arm and drawn the shroud closer about his face, to keep out the wet. Not an ear has heard the riving thunderbolt, nor so much as an eyelid trembled on the still eyes for all the lightning's fury.

But had there been another human presence on the midnight scene, some lightning flash would have revealed the old man, grand, a terrible figure, in sympathy with its wild, sad violence. He stood beside his masterpiece, towering to his utmost height in a posture of all but superhuman majesty and strength. His long white hair and longer white beard streamed outward on the roaring winds. His arms, bared to his shoulder, swung aloft a ponderous hammer. His face, ashen-gray as the marble before him, was set with an expression of stern despair. Then, as the thunder crashed, his hammer fell on the monument. Bolt after bolt, blow after blow. Once more he might have been seen kneeling beside the ruin, his eyes strained close to its heart, awaiting another flash to tell him that the inviolable epitaph had shared in the destruction.

For days following many curious eyes came to peer into the opened heart of the shattered structure, but in vain.

Thus the masterpiece of Nicholas failed of its end, though it served another. For no one could have heard the story of it, before it was destroyed, without being made to realise how melancholy that a man should rear a monument of execration to the false heart of the woman he once had loved; and how terrible for mankind to celebrate the dead for the evil that was in them instead of the good.

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## Henry van Dyke (born 1852)

### SALT

Ye are the salt of the earth.—MATTHEW v. 13.

This figure of speech is plain and pungent. Salt is savory, purifying, preservative. It is one of those superfluities which the great French wit defined as things that are very necessary." From the very beginning of human history men have set a high value upon it and sought for it in caves and by the seashore. The nation that had a good supply of it was counted rich. A bag of salt, among the barbarous tribes, was worth more than a man. The Jews prized it especially because they lived in a warm climate where food was difficult to keep, and because their religion laid particular emphasis on cleanliness, and because salt was largely used in their sacrifices.

Christ chose an image which was familiar when He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth." This was His conception of their mission, their influence. They were to cleanse and sweeten the world in which they lived, to keep it from decay, to give a new and more wholesome flavor to human existence. Their character was not to be passive, but active. The sphere of its action was to be this present life. There is no use in saving salt for heaven. It will not be needed there. Its mission is to permeate, season, and purify things on earth.

Now, from one point of view, it was an immense compliment for the disciples to be spoken to in this

way. Their Master showed great confidence in them. He set a high value upon them. The historian Livy could find nothing better to express his admiration for the people of ancient Greece than this very phrase. He called them *sal gentium*, "the salt of the nations."

But it was not from this point of view that Christ was speaking. He was not paying compliments. He was giving a clear and powerful call to duty. His thought was not that His disciples should congratulate themselves on being better than other men. He wished them to ask themselves whether they actually had in them the purpose and the power to make other men better. Did they intend to exercise a purifying, seasoning, saving influence in the world? Were they going to make their presence felt on earth and felt for good? If not, they would be failures and frauds. The savor would be out of them. They would be like lumps of rock salt which has lain too long in a damp storehouse; good for nothing but to be thrown away and trodden under foot; worth less than common rock or common clay, because it would not even make good roads.

Men of privilege without power are waste material. Men of enlightenment without influence are the poorest kind of rubbish. Men of intellectual and moral and religious culture, who are not active forces for good in society, are not worth what it costs to produce and keep them. If they pass for Christian they are guilty of obtaining respect under false pretenses. They were meant to be the salt of the earth. And the first duty of salt is to be salty.

This is the subject on which I want to speak to you to-day. The saltiness of salt is the symbol of a noble, powerful, truly religious life.

You college students are men of privilege. It costs ten times as much, in labor and care and money, to bring you out where you are to-day as it costs to educate the average man, and a hundred times as much as it costs to raise a boy without any education. This fact brings you face to face with a question: Are you going to be worth your salt?

You have had mental training and plenty of instruction in various branches of learning. You ought to be full of intelligence. You have had moral discipline, and the influences of good example have been steadily brought to bear upon you. You ought to be full of principle. You have had religious advantages and abundant inducements to choose the better part. You ought to be full of faith. What are you going to do with your intelligence, your principle, your faith? It is your duty to make active use of them for the seasoning, the cleansing, the saving of the world. Do not be sponges. Be the salt of the earth.

Think, first, of the influence for good which men of intelligence may exercise in the world if they will only put their culture to the right use. Half the troubles of mankind come from ignorance—ignorance which is systematically organized with societies for its support and newspapers for its dissemination—ignorance which consists less in not knowing things than in wilfully ignoring the things that are already known. There are certain physical diseases which would go out of existence in ten years if people could only remember what has been learned. There are certain political and social plagues which are propagated only in the atmosphere of shallow self-confidence and vulgar thoughtlessness. There is a yellow

fever of literature specially adapted and prepared for the spread of shameless curiosity, incorrect information, and complacent idiocy among all classes of the population. Persons who fall under the influence of this pest become so triumphantly ignorant that they cannot distinguish between news and knowledge. They develop a morbid thirst for printed matter, and the more they read the less they learn. They are fit soil for the bacteria of folly and fanaticism.

Now the men of thought, of cultivation, of reason in the community ought to be an antidote to these dangerous influences. Having been ~~instructed~~ in the lessons of history and science and philosophy they are bound to contribute their knowledge to the service of society. As a rule they are willing enough to do this for pay, in the professions of law and medicine and teaching and divinity. What I plead for is the wider, nobler, unpaid service which an educated man renders to society simply by being thoughtful and by helping other men to think.

The college-men of a country ought to be its most conservative men; that is to say, the men who do most to conserve it. They ought to be the men whom demagogues cannot inflame nor political bosses pervert. They ought to bring wild theories to the test of reason, and withstand rash experiments with obstinate prudence. When it is proposed, for example, to enrich the whole nation by debasing its currency, they should be the men who demand time to think whether real wealth can be created by artificial legislation. And if they succeed in winning time to think, the danger will pass—or rather it will be transformed into some other danger requiring a new application of the salt of intelligence. For the fermenting activity

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of ignorance is incessant, and perpetual thoughtfulness is the price of social safety.

But it is not ignorance alone that works harm in the body of society. Passion is equally dangerous. Take, for instance, a time when war is imminent. How easily and how wildly the passions of men are roused by the mere talk of fighting. How ready they are to plunge into a fierce conflict for an unknown motive, for a base motive, or for no motive at all. Educated men should be the steadiest opponents of war while it is avoidable. But when it becomes inevitable, save at a cost of a failure in duty and a loss of honor, then they should be the most vigorous advocates of carrying it to a swift, triumphant, and noble end. No man ought to be too much educated to love his country and, if need be, to die for it. The culture which leaves a man without a flag is only one degree less miserable than that which leaves him without a God. To be empty of enthusiasms and overflowing with criticisms is not a sign of cultivation, but of enervation. The best learning is that which intensifies a man's patriotism as well as clarifies it. The finest education is that which puts a man in closest touch with his fellow-men. The true intelligence is that which acts, not as cayenne pepper to sting the world, but as salt to cleanse and conserve it.

Think, in the second place, of the duty which men of moral principle owe to society in regard to the evils which corrupt and degrade it. Of the existence of these evils we need to be reminded again and again, just because we are comparatively clean and decent and upright people. Men who live an orderly life are in great danger of doing nothing else. We wrap our virtue up in little bags of respectability and keep

it in the storehouse of a safe reputation. But if it is genuine virtue it is worthy of a better use than that. It is fit, nay it is designed and demanded, to be used as salt, for the purifying of human life.

There are multitudes of our fellow-men whose existence is dark, confused, and bitter. Some of them are groaning under the burden of want; partly because of their own idleness or incapacity, no doubt, but partly also because of the rapacity, greed, and injustice of other men. Some of them are tortured in bondage to vice; partly by their own false choice, no doubt, but partly also for want of guidance and good counsel and human sympathy. Every great city contains centers of moral decay which an honest man cannot think of without horror, pity, and dread. The trouble is that many honest folk dislike these emotions so much that they shut their eyes and walk through the world with their heads in the air, breathing a little atmosphere of their own, and congratulating themselves that the world goes very well now. But is it well that the things which eat the heart out of manhood and womanhood should go on in all our great towns?

Is it well that while we range with science, glorying in the time, City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city slime? There, among the glooming alleys, progress halts on palsied feet; Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the street. There the smoldering fire of fever creeps across the rotted floor, And the crowded couch of incest, in the warrens of the poor.

Even in what we call respectable society, forces of corruption are at work. Are there no unrighteous practices in business, no false standards in social life, no licensed frauds and falsehoods in politics, no vile

and vulgar tendencies in art and literature and journalism, in this sunny and self-complacent modern world of which we are a part? All these things are signs of decay. The question for us as men of salt is: What are we going to do to arrest and counteract these tendencies? It is not enough for us to take a negative position in regard to them. If our influence is to be real, it must be positive. It is not enough to say "Touch not the unclean thing." On the contrary, we must touch it, as salt touches decay to check and overcome it. Good men are not meant to be simply like trees planted by rivers of water, flourishing in their own pride and for their own sake. They ought to be like the eucalyptus trees which have been set out in the marshes of the Campagna, from which a healthful, tonic influence is said to be diffused to countervail the malaria. They ought to be like the tree of paradise, "whose leaves are for the healing of nations."

Where good men are in business, lying and cheating and gambling should be more difficult, truth and candor and fair dealing should be easier and more popular, just because of their presence. Where good men are in society, grossness of thought and speech ought to stand rebuked, high ideals and courtliness and chivalrous actions and "the desire of fame and all that makes a man" ought to seem at once more desirable and more attainable to every one who comes into contact with them.

There have been men of this quality in the world. It is recorded of Barnardino of Siena, that when he came into the room, his gentleness and purity were so evident that all that was base and silly in the talk of his companions was abashed and fell into silence.

Artists like Fra Angelico have made their pictures like prayers. Warriors like the Chevalier Bayard and Sir Philip Sidney and Henry Havelock and Chinese Gordon have dwelt amid camps and conflicts as Knights of the Holy Ghost. Philosophers like John Locke and George Berkeley, men of science like Newton and Herschel, poets like Wordsworth and Tennyson and Browning, have taught virtue by their lives as well as wisdom by their works. Humanitarians like Howard and Wilberforce and Raikes and Charles Brace have given themselves to noble causes. Every man who will has it in his power to make his life count for something positive in the redemption of society. And this is what every man of moral principle is bound to do if he wants to belong to the salt of the earth.

There is a loftier ambition than merely to stand high in the world. It is to stoop down and lift mankind a little higher. There is a nobler character than that which is merely incorruptible. It is the character which acts as an antidote and preventive of corruption. Fearlessly to speak the words which bear witness to righteousness and truth and purity; patiently to do the deeds which strengthen virtue and kindle hope in your fellow-men; generously to lend a hand to those who are trying to climb upward; faithfully to give your support and your personal help to the efforts which are making to elevate and purify the social life of the world,—that is what it means to have salt in your character. And that is the way to make your life interesting and savory and powerful. The men that have been happiest, and the men that are the best remembered, are the men that have done good.

What the world needs to-day is not a new system of ethics. It is simply a larger number of people who will make a steady effort to live up to the system that they have already. There is plenty of room for heroism in the plainest kind of duty. The greatest of all wars has been going on for centuries. It is the ceaseless, glorious conflict against the evil that is in the world. Every warrior who will enter that age-long battle may find a place in the army, and win his spurs, and achieve honor, and obtain favor with the great Captain of the Host, if he will but do his best to make his life purer and finer for every one that lives.

It is one of the burning questions of to-day whether university life and training really fit men for taking their share in this supreme conflict. There is no abstract answer; but every college class that graduates is a part of the concrete answer. Therein lies your responsibility, Gentlemen. It lies with you to illustrate the meanness of an education which produces learned shirks and refined skulkers; or to illuminate the perfection of unselfish culture with the light of devotion to humanity. It lies with you to confess that you have not been strong enough to assimilate your privileges; or to prove that you are able to use all that you have learned for the end for which it was intended. I believe the difference in the results depends very much less upon the educational system than it does upon the personal quality of the teachers and the men. Richard Porson was a university man, and he seemed to live chiefly to drink port and read Greek. Thomas Guthrie was a university man, and he proved that he meant what he said in his earnest verse,—

I live for those who love me,  
For those who know me true,  
For the heaven that bends above me,  
And the good that I can do;  
For the wrongs that need resistance,  
For the cause that lacks assistance,  
For the future in the distance,  
And the good that I can do.

It remains only to speak briefly, in the third place, of the part which religion ought to play in the purifying, preserving, and sweetening of society. Hitherto I have spoken to you simply as men of intelligence and men of principle. But the loftiest reach of reason and the strongest inspiration of morality is religious faith. I know there are some thoughtful men, upright men, unselfish and useful men, who say that they have no such faith. But they are very few. And the reason of their rarity is because it is immensely difficult to be unselfish and useful and thoughtful, without a conscious faith in God, and in the divine law, and in the gospel of salvation, and in the future life. I trust that none of you are going to try that desperate experiment. I trust that all of you have religion to guide and sustain you in life's hard and perilous adventure. If you have, I beg you to make sure that it is the right kind of religion. The name makes little difference. The outward form makes little difference. The test of its reality is its power to cleanse life and make it worth living; to save the things that are most precious in our existence from corruption and decay; to lend a new lustre to our ideals and to feed our hopes with inextinguishable light; to produce characters which shall fulfil Christ's word and be the salt of the earth.

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Religion is something which a man cannot invent for himself, nor keep to himself. If it does not show in his conduct it does not exist in his heart. If he has just barely enough of it to save himself alone, it is doubtful whether he has even enough for that. Religion ought to bring out and intensify the flavor of all that is best in manhood, and make it fit, to use Wordsworth's noble phrase,

For human nature's daily food.

Good citizens, honest workmen, cheerful comrades, true friends, gentle men,—that is what the product of religion should be. And the power that produces such men is the great antiseptic of society, to preserve it from decay.

Decay begins in discord. It is the loss of balance in an organism. One part of the system gets too much nourishment, another part too little. Morbid processes are established. Tissues break down. In their debris all sorts of malignant growths take root. Ruin follows.

Now this is precisely the danger to which the social organism is exposed. From this danger religion is meant to preserve us. Certainly there can be no true Christianity which does not aim at this result. It should be a balancing, compensating, regulating power. It should keep the relations between man and man, between class and class, normal and healthful and mutually beneficent. It should humble the pride of the rich, and moderate the envy of the poor. It should soften and ameliorate the unavoidable inequalities of life, and transform them from causes of jealous hatred into opportunities of loving and generous service. If it fails to do this it is salt without savor,

and when a social revolution comes, as the consequence of social corruption, men will cast out the unsalted religion and tread it under foot.

Was not this what happened in the French Revolution? What did men care for the religion that had failed to curb sensuality and pride and cruelty under the oppression of the old régime, the religion that had forgotten to deal bread to the hungry, to comfort the afflicted, to break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free? What did they care for the religion that had done little or nothing to make men understand and love and help one another? Nothing. It was the first thing that they threw away in the madness of their revolt and trampled in the mire of their contempt.

But was the world much better off without that false kind of religion than with it? Did the Revolution really accomplish anything for the purification and preservation of society? No, it only turned things upside down, and brought the elements that had been at the bottom to the top. It did not really change the elements, or sweeten life, or arrest the processes of decay. The only thing that can do this is the true kind of religion, which brings men closer to one another by bringing them all nearer to God.

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I call you to-day, my brethren, to take your part, not with the idle, the frivolous, the faithless, the selfish, the gilded youth, but with the earnest, the manly, the devout, the devoted, the golden youth. I summon you to do your share in the renaissance of religion for your own sake, for your fellowmen's sake, for ~~your~~ country's sake. On this fair Sunday, when all around us tells of bright hope and glorious

promise, let the vision of our country, with her perils, with her opportunities, with her temptations, with her splendid powers, with her threatening sins, rise before our souls. What needs she more in this hour, than the cleansing, saving, conserving influence of right religion? What better service could we render her than to set our lives to the tune of these words of Christ, and be indeed the salt of our country, and, through her growing power, of the whole earth? Ah, bright will be the day, and full of glory, when the bells of every church, of every schoolhouse, of every college, of every university, ring with the music of this message, and find their echo in the hearts of the youth of America. That will be the chime of a new age.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

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## Henry S. Pritchett (1857-1907)

### SCIENCE \*

The progress of science—like human progress in all directions—is a somewhat irregular process. In this process we can generally distinguish several stages, which, however, merge constantly into one another. The first stage is that of the collection of scientific data; the next, some sort of logical arrangement of the data; and finally, generalizations made in the effort to interpret the phenomena. This chronological arrangement, however, is subject to constant variations. The human mind is active in the construction of theories formed far in advance of positive knowledge; and while such theories are often erroneous, they nevertheless serve to stimulate investigation and to lead ultimately to truth. Scientific progress is thus made up of a continuous series of collections of fact, while efforts at interpretation occur, not in their chronologic order, but rather in the order which the temperaments of men and the tendencies of the age may suggest.

For this reason it is seldom possible to compare sharply the stage of science at two distinct epochs. There are, to be sure, discoveries which belong to a given year, but they are ordinarily the culmination of long periods of collection and comparison of

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facts, which represent rather processes than distinct efforts, and the men who contribute most to the collection and correlation of facts are often unknown to the public.

Furthermore, it is to be remembered when one considers physical science that the facts and the phenomena of science are the same to-day as fifty years ago. Chemical reactions, the nature and growth of microbe organisms, the transformations of energy, are the same in nature to-day as they were a half-century ago. For this reason, the state of science at two distinct epochs cannot be contrasted in the same way as one might compare two epochs in a creative art, such as literature, in which a whole new school of authors may have grown up in consequence of a new social factor or a new literary cult.

Comparisons of scientific progress at two distinct epochs resemble rather two views from a mountain, one view-point a little higher than the other, each looking out upon the same topography, but showing hills and valleys and streams in greater detail or with greater clearness from one point than from the other by reason of the difference in altitude. In some such way one may compare the outlook in science to-day with that of a half-century ago; the facts and the phenomena are the same, the point of view has changed enormously.

To bring such a view within the compass of a brief discussion, one needs also to keep in mind two other facts. First, that in making such a comparison, one is viewing the scientific horizon, not from the standpoint of the specialist in any department of science, but rather from the standpoint of the

educated American. Such a man is not interested in the minute subdivisions of science, nor in the names of the specialists who have served it; but rather in the outcome, in the direction both of utilitarian ends and of intellectual and moral results, which the progress of science promises to the race. Second, in making such a comparison from the standpoint of the general reader, it is most important to keep in view the unity of human knowledge. Science is essentially one, and while, for the sake of convenience, it must be classified into numerous subdivisions, these parts have a relation to the whole. Thus, physical science not only concerns itself with the objective world, but it goes far beyond this and works at the relation between human circumstances and the necessary laws which govern physical objects. In the same way, the historical sciences transcend the social phenomena with which they are immediately concerned and attempt an interpretation of these in the light of physical law. Thus all divisions of science are inextricably yoked together in the common effort to explain the history of man, and the adjustment of the human race to its environment.

When one considers science in this larger aspect he realizes that the middle of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth are two extremely interesting epochs to compare. After centuries of accumulation of facts, the men of the first half of the nineteenth century had begun those great generalizations which the mid-century saw securely in the grasp of the human mind, and the fifty years which have since elapsed have borne a rich fruitage of those generalizations.

The fundamental contrasts which stand out most prominently in such a comparison may be grouped under four heads:—

1. The last fifty years have seen a great betterment of the theoretical basis of physical science.

2. This development has been marked by a notable stimulation of scientific research; a differen-tiation of scientific effort, and the creation thereby of a great number of special sciences or departments of science.

3. The possession of a secure theoretical basis and the intellectual quickening which has followed it have resulted in the application of science to the arts and to the industries in such measure as the world has never before known. These applications have to do with the comfort, health, pleasures, and happiness of the human race, and affect vitally all the conditions of modern life.

4. Last, but perhaps in many respects the most significant of all, is the effect which has been pro-duced upon the religious faith and the philosophy of life of the civilized world by the widespread introduction of what may be called the modern scientific spirit.

I shall endeavour to point out the more significant movements which group themselves under these four heads, begging the reader always to bear in mind the fundamental facts to which I have alluded, that is to say, the desire to present a view, not of the scientific specialist, but of the educated intelligent American; and secondly, to keep in mind at the same time, notwithstanding the differen-tiations of science, the essential unity of human knowledge.

*The Betterment of the Theoretical Basis of  
Physical Science.*

The fundamental sciences which have opened to us such knowledge of the laws of the universe as we now possess are mathematics, chemistry, and physics. The first of these deals with numerical relations, and it has been the tool with which the human mind has had most experience. It had advanced to a high stage of perfection long before any other branch of science had attained even respectable standing. Men learned to reason in abstract relations with great skill and proficiency long in advance of the time when they reasoned from physical phenomena to their cause. The end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth saw a galaxy of astronomers and mathematicians of whom Laplace and Gauss were the most fruitful, who carried mathematical treatment of the problems of astronomy and geodesy to a point which left little to be desired. The last century has seen little improvement in these processes, but mathematics has remained the most facile tool in the hands of the physical investigator, in the interpretation of physical phenomena, and in the expression of the transformations of energy. But for the significant progress which has been made in the last fifty years we are indebted to the other two fundamental sciences, chemistry and physics. The first deals with the composition and transformation of matter; the second with energy and the transformation of energy.

The connection between physics and chemistry is so intimate that it is impossible to draw a line of separation. In general, we are concerned in chemistry

with the elements which, by their combination, form various substances, and with the composition of these substances; while in physics we are concerned with matter as a mass, as a substance representing a fixed composition, though subject to changes of form and of place. Changes by which the identity of the body is affected, such as, for example, hydrogen and oxygen combine to form water, are chemical changes and do not belong to physics; while changes which matter undergoes without altering its composition or destroying the identity of the body are physical and are part of the study of physics. Inasmuch, however, as chemical changes are accompanied by changes of energy, there is a broad region which belongs to the investigations both of the physicist and of the chemist, and which completely connects those two fundamental sciences.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, John Dalton announced his famous atomic theory, which has served to unify the known or suspected laws of chemical combination. Dalton discovered that to every element a definite number could be assigned, and that these numbers, or their multiples, govern the formation of all compounds. Oxygen, for instance, unites with other elements in the proportion of eight parts of weight, or some multiple thereof, and never in other ratios. With the help of these atomic weights—or combining parts, as they are sometimes called—the composition of any substance could be represented by a simple formula. This theory had become well established by the middle of the nineteenth century as the thread upon which all chemical results hung, and the second half of the century began under the stimulation which this

discovery brought about. Before this period, inorganic chemistry—that is, the chemistry of the metals, of earths, of common oxides, bases, and salts—had received the greatest attention, and during the first half of the nineteenth century inorganic chemistry embraced almost all the work of chemists. The second half of the nineteenth century has been the day of organic chemistry. It was at first supposed that the two fields of research were absolutely distinct, but this belief was overthrown by Woehler, who showed that urea, an organic body, was easily prepared from inorganic materials, and since that day a vast number of organic syntheses have been effected. Out of this study has grown the basis of the chemical theory of to-day, that is to say, the conception of chemical structure, which has placed the chemistry of the twentieth century upon a theoretical foundation vastly more secure and vastly more significant than that of half a century ago.

Briefly stated, this theory of chemical structure is as follows: Every atom, so far as its union with other atoms is concerned, is seen to have a certain atom-fixing power, which is known as its valence. For example, take hydrogen as the standard of reference, and consider some of its simplest compounds. In hydrochloric acid, one atom of hydrogen is added to one of chlorine. These elementary atoms combine only in the ratio of one to one. They are called “univalent,” that is, their power of fixing or uniting with other atoms is unity. In water, on the other hand, a single oxygen atom holds two of hydrogen in combination, and so oxygen is called a bivalent element. Nitrogen, phosphorous,

and other elements go still farther and are trivalent, while carbon is a quadrivalent substance, forming, therefore, compounds of the most complex type. The theory as thus stated is no mere speculation. It is the statement of observed fact, and this shows that the atoms unite, not at haphazard, but according to certain rules.

A notable advance took place in the years 1860 to 1870 in the discovery of a general law connecting all the chemical elements. That those elements are related was early recognized, but it was not until the epoch-making work of Mendeléeff that the periodic variation in their properties was recognized, and the connection between the valency of the atom and its properties and compounds was interpreted.

Within twenty years chemistry has been enormously developed upon its electrical side, both theoretically and practically. From a purely chemical point of view, probably the most important electrical phenomena are those of electrolysis. When a current of electricity passes through a compound solution, the latter undergoes decomposition, and the dissolved substance is separated into two parts which move with unequal velocities in opposite directions. The conducting liquid is called an electrolyte, and the separated parts, or particles, of the compound in solution are termed its ions. One ion is positively, the other negatively, electrified, and hence they tend to accumulate around the opposite poles. Under suitable conditions, the separations can be made permanent and this fact is of the greatest significance in the different processes of electrometallurgy.

The modern science of physics has its basis in the doctrine of the conservation of energy. This

doctrine as stated in the words of Maxwell is, "The total energy of any material system is a quantity which can neither be increased nor diminished by any action between the parts of the system, though it may be transformed into any of the forms of which energy is susceptible." A little more than a half-century ago, our knowledge of physics consisted in the main of a large mass of facts loosely tied together by theories not always consistent. Between 1845 and 1850 the labors of Mayer, Joule, Helmholtz, and Sir William Thomson had placed the theory of the conservation of energy upon firm ground, and for the last half-century it has been the basic law for testing the accuracy of physical experiments and for extending physical theory. To the presence of such a highly defined and consistent theory is due the great development which our generation has witnessed.

The most remarkable development of the half-century in the domain of physics has gone on in that field included under the name radio-activity, a development which bids fair to affect the whole theory of physical processes. By radiation is meant the propagation of energy in straight lines. This is effected by vibrations in the ether which fills all space, both molecular and inter-stellar. This theory is based upon the conception that the vibrations are due to oscillations of the ultimate particles of matter.

Experiments in vacuum tubes by various investigators led to a long series of most interesting results, culminating in the discovery by Roentgen in 1895 of the so-called X-rays. These rays have properties quite different from those of ordinary light. They are not deflected by a magnet and will

penetrate glass, tin, aluminium, and in general metals of low atomic weight. In 1896, Becquerel discovered that uranium possessed the property of spontaneously emitting rays capable of passing through bodies opaque to ordinary light.

Shortly after the discovery of this property in uranium Madame and Professor Curie succeeded in separating from pitchblende two new substances of very high radio-activity, called radium and polonium, the latter named after her native land, Poland.

The radiations from these various substances are invisible to the eye, but act upon a photographic plate and discharge an electrified body. A very active substance like radium will cause phosphorescent substance to become luminous.

If a magnetic field is applied to a pencil of radium rays the rays are separated out into three kinds, much as light rays are sifted out by passing through a prism. One set of rays is bent to the left, another to the right, and the third set keeps on in the original direction.

The emission of the particles which deviate to the left and right appears to proceed from explosions in some of the atoms of these substances. It is estimated that two hundred thousand millions are expelled from one gram of radium bromide every second, yet the number of atoms in a gram is so enormous that this rate of emission may continue some years without an appreciable wasting of the mass of the substance.

The discovery of these substances with their remarkable properties has not only led to interesting applications of the most novel kind, but has

stimulated the imagination of investigators, and given rise to various new explanations of cosmic phenomena. For example, it has been suggested that the internal heat of the earth may be kept up by the heat emitted from radium and other radio-active matter. All such theories are yet in the speculative stage. It may be said in general that, while the phenomena presented by the radio-active substances have caused physicists to revise physical theory in respect to molecular energy, nothing has been discovered which is inconsistent with the fundamental law of the conservation of energy.

Progress no less real has been made in those sciences which deal with the study of the human body and the human mind. Physiology, during the last half of the nineteenth century, has gained nearly all our present knowledge of the chemistry of digestion and secretion and of the mechanics of circulation, while psychology had advanced from a branch of philosophy to the position of a distinctive science.

From whatever point of view one regards human progress, he will be led to realize that one of the greatest achievements of the race is the work of the army of scholars and investigators to whom is due the betterment in these fifty years of the theoretical basis of these two fundamental physical sciences, a basis which is not only intellectually sound, but intellectually fruitful. The roll of these names—chemists, physicists, biologists, inventors, investigators in all fields of human knowledge—is made up from all lands. \*It is a world's roll of honour in which not only individuals but nations have earned immortality. Of all the men whose names are here written there are two whose work is so fundamental and far-reaching

that the world is glad to accord to them a pre-eminence. These are the Frenchman, Louis Pasteur, and the Englishman, Charles Darwin.

*The Differentiation of Science and the Development of  
Special Sciences.*

Under the stimulus of the great fundamental theories which have tended to unify chemistry and physics, and also to direct attention to a vast field common to both and previously unexplored, a large number of special sciences, or divisions of science, have been developed. Once the law of chemical structure was ascertained and the possibilities were made evident which this law involved, and once the law of the conservation of energy was clear and the multiform transformations which might be made under such a law formulated, there was opened in every nook and corner of the physical universe the opportunity for new combinations and for new transformations. The result of this has been that in the last five decades physicists and chemists, having these threads in their hands as guides, have gone off into all sorts of by-paths. There has grown up through these excursions a great number of minor divisions of science, dependent on processes partly physical and partly chemical, but all related to one another and to the fundamental sciences of chemistry and physics.

By means of that wonderful instrument, the spectroscope, has arisen the combination of the old science of astronomy with physics, known as astrophysics. There have been interesting gains in the older astronomy during this period, such as the discoveries of the new satellites of Mars, of Jupiter, and

of Saturn, all by American astronomers; the discovery of some hundreds of asteroids with the unexpected form of some of their orbits; and the variation of the terrestrial latitude. All these discoveries are in the direction of the applications of gravitational astronomy upon the foundations laid by Newton, Laplace, and Gauss. The significant gains have come, however, in the new astronomy, which is really celestial physics, and are the outcome of the modern spectroscopic and photographic plate. The motion of stars and nebulae in the line of sight, and discovery of invisible companions by the doubling of the lines of the spectrum, and above all, the determinations of the physical constitution of the distant suns and nebulae have thrown a great light not only upon cosmic evolution, but upon the probable history of our own planet. Perhaps no one result of the whole study is so significant as this: In the far-distant suns which shine upon us, as well as in our own sun, we find only those same elements which exist in our own soil and in our own atmosphere. Just as the law of the combination of chemical elements and of the conservation of energy points to a uniform physical law on our planet, so also the unity of material composition throughout the universe of stars seems to point with equal significance to a physical unity of the whole universe.

Early in the seventeenth century, certain "animalculæ," as they were called, became recognized as the simplest form of life; but the modern science of bacteriology dates from the epoch-making investigations of Pasteur and Koch, conducted within the last thirty-five years. One of the most important steps was the introduction by Koch of trustworthy

methods for separating individual bacterial species. Since many distinct species are indistinguishable from one another by size and shape, it was obviously impossible by the older methods of study to separate one from the other. Koch suggested the use of solid materials as culture media, thereby representing the conditions so often seen when such organic matter as bread becomes mouldy. He demonstrated that the addition of gelatin to the infusions employed for the successful cultivation of bacteria converted them into practically solid culture media without robbing them of any of their useful properties; and by the employment of such media it was possible to separate as pure cultures the individual species that one desired to analyze. The introduction of this method for the isolation and study of bacterial species in pure cultures constitutes perhaps the most important stimulus to the development of modern bacteriology.

The studies made by Pasteur upon fermentation and the souring of wine, and upon the maladies of silkworms, together with Koch's studies upon the infections of wounds, and the appropriate methods of analyzing them, were rich in suggestion to the workers in this new field. Two of the most important results have been in the application of these studies to the problems of the sanitary engineer and to the work of preventive medicine.

The drinking water of our cities is purified to-day by the process of natural sand filtration, by the septic tank process, etc. In these methods the living bacteria are the instruments by which the results are obtained. The sand grains in the filters serve only as objects to which the bacteria can attach themselves

and multiply. By the normal life processes of the bacteria the polluting organic matter in the water is used up and inert material given off as a result.

But even more important than this work of sanitation is the contribution of bacteriology to preventive medicine. Early in the course of his work, Pasteur discovered that certain virulent pathogenic bacteria, when kept under certain conditions, gradually lost their disease-producing power, without their other life properties being disturbed. When injected into animals in this attenuated state, there resulted a mild, temporary, and modified form of infection, usually followed by recovery. With recovery the animal so treated was immune from the activities of the fully virulent bacteria of the same species. The development of this fruitful idea has not only resulted in the saving of millions of money, but it has resulted as well in the prevention of human disease, the greatest triumph of modern science.

A study of the laws of physics and chemistry in relation to living plants and animals led in a similar way to the discovery that the processes of the entire race history are reflected in the processes of the growth of the embryo, a result which created the new science of embryology.

Similarly, in the studies of energy differentiations have gone on. Fifty years ago, our colleges had a single professor of what was called at that day natural philosophy. To-day, a modern college will divide this field among a corps of teachers and investigators, one devoting his attention to mechanics, another to heat, another to electricity, another to magnetism, and another to sound and light. In turn, electricity will be subdivided, the investigator

concerning himself with a constantly narrowing field of phenomena, with the expectation of working out completely the problem whose solution is sought. All these departments of physical science, with their numerous sub-divisions, are the offspring of the fundamental sciences chemistry and physics. No contrast is more striking in comparing the science of to-day with that of fifty years ago than this differentiation, unless it be the even more significant fact that, notwithstanding this differentiation and division of labor, the essential unity of science is more apparent than ever before. Astronomy, geology, and biology were, fifty years ago, separate, and to a large extent unrelated, sciences. To-day they are seen to flourish in a common soil.

*The Application of Science to the Arts and to the Industries.*

In no other way has the march of science in the last half-century been so evident to the eyes of the average intelligent man as in its practical applications to the arts and industries. Modern life to-day is on a different plane from that of fifty years ago by reason of applied science alone. Whether this has added to the joy of living, and to the general happiness of mankind, is another question; but that it has raised the standard of health, that it has added enormously to the comfort and to the conveniences of man, no one can dispute. The house of fifty years ago lacked the facilities of pure water; it was illuminated, at the best, by imperfect gas jets; it was warmed by the old-fashioned stove; and if situated in an isolated place, communication was possible only by messenger at the

expense of time and labor. The modern sanitary water service, electric lighting, modern means of construction, and the telephone make the dwelling-house of to-day a wholly different place from the dwelling-house of fifty years ago.

Steam transportation had already begun its marvellous work before the epoch at which we start, but its great application has been made in the last half-century. Just as the fruitful theories of physics and chemistry have advanced physical science in all its applications, so also the elementary development and application of steam have blossomed in the last half-century into a transportation system which makes the world of to-day a wholly different world from that of fifty years ago.

Perhaps the fundamental application of science which has done the most to change the face of the civilized world is the invention by Sir Henry Bessemer of a cheap means of manufacturing steel from pig iron. On August 13, fifty-one years ago, he read before the British Association at Cheltenham a paper dealing with the invention which has made his name famous. His paper was entitled "The Manufacture of Malleable Iron and Steel without Fuel" and described a new and cheap process of making steel from pig iron by blowing a blast of air through it when in a state of fusion, so as to clear it of all carbon, and then adding the requisite quantity of carbon to produce steel. Not one man in ten thousand knows who Sir Henry Bessemer was or what he did, but every man who touches civilization leads to-day a different life from that which he would have led, by reason of Bessemer's invention. Cheap steel is the basis of our material advancement.

One of the most interesting applications of chemistry is that involved in the manufacture of aniline colors. Up to the time of the investigation of Sir William Perkin in 1856, commerce had depended on vegetable colors, which had been obtained at great cost and difficulty. That these rainbow hues could ever be procured from so insignificant a substance as coal tar seemed as improbable as anything which one could imagine, and yet from the labors of the chemist there have come in the last thirty years colors surpassing in beauty anything produced by nature. The manufacture of such colors has come to be a great industry, employing thousands of men and enormous capital, and this too out of a waste product which manufacturers were once quite ready to throw away.

One of the most interesting combinations of chemistry and physics is that shown in the modern photograph. Photography as an art had reached a considerable stage of development by the early fifties, but the wet collodion process, as it was called, while possible for the professional, was difficult for the amateur. Plates had to be prepared and finished on the spot, transportation was difficult, and there was a demand for a process which could be used in the field as easily as in the office. The first step came in 1856 in the invention of what was called dry collodion, followed rapidly by similar inventions which did away with the troublesome preparation of the plate, and the modern camera, an instrument, so convenient and easy of transportation, and yet so safe and sure in its results, that on the wildest expeditions the most perfect photographs can be taken.

To-day the word which best represents to the popular mind the triumphant application of science is the word "electricity." The fruitful idea that electricity, like light, was only a form of energy, lies at the base of great inventions which have been made. The moment that electricity was produced by transforming other forms of energy, there became possible all sorts of machines which could not be imagined under any other hypothesis. It was in the development of this idea that the inventors have perfected during this half-century the electric motor, the electric light, the telephone, and the thousand separate devices by which mechanical energy is transformed into electric energy, and this again into heat or light. It is the machines for these marvellous transformations which have been invented in the last generation that have made the greatest difference in our modern life. The storage battery, the arc light, the incandescent light, and the telephone have all come in as actual parts of our everyday life within the memory of men of middle age, and, as a crowning exploit of the century, telegraphy without wires brings us messages from ships in mid-ocean. In every department of domestic life, in every line of transportation, in almost all methods of communication between men and cities, the application of electricity has come to play a great role. So numerous are these applications, so important are they to our comfort and to our well-being, that we have ceased to wonder at them, and year by year new applications are made which a few decades ago would have called forth astonishment, but which we receive as a part of the day's work. So great is this field, so promising are the applications which we may hope to see made, that no

man can foretell what the inventions of the future may be.

To-day we are interested not less in the applications of electricity than in its supply. So well is the law of transformation of energy now understood and so sure are the results of our inventors, that we may confidently expect that the applications of electricity to the arts and industries will reach almost any point of perfection. A vital question is, can a supply of energy be found which can be efficiently and cheaply transformed into electric energy?

At present our chief source of electricity is coal, and the century just closing has given no particular indication of a possible rival to coal, unless it be water power. Over a large part of the earth's surface, however, neither coal nor water power is accessible. Furthermore, the supply of coal is limited. It is likely to become in the near future more and more expensive, and one of the great problems which the inventors of our day face is the problem of devising a cheap and effective source of energy for the production of power.

There is one source to which all minds revert when this question is mentioned, a source most promising and yet one which has so far eluded the investigator. The sun on a clear day delivers upon each square yard of the earth's surface the equivalent of approximately two horse-power of mechanical energy working continuously. If even a fraction of this power could be transformed into mechanical or electrical energy and stored, it would do the world's work. Here is power delivered at our very doors without cost. How to store the energy so generously furnished, and keep it on tap for future use, is the

problem. That the next half-century will see some solution thereof, chemical or otherwise, seems likely.

Perhaps in no way have the applications of science so ministered to human happiness as in the contributions of the last fifty years to preventive medicine, surgery, and sanitation. Within this half-century Pasteur did his great work on spontaneous generation and in the development of the theory of anti-toxins. Following in his steps, Lister applied the principles which Pasteur had enunciated, in the treatment of wounds and sores. The whole outcome has been a splendid step forward, not only in such matters as the treatment of diphtheria, yellow fever, and malaria, but also in the direction of preventive medicine. The scientific world is organizing for a fight to the death with tuberculosis, that worst malady of mankind, and if there is any such advance in general education and in general knowledge during the next fifty years as in the last, it is not too much to hope that this dread scourge of humanity may be vanquished. In no direction in which science touches life is there a greater contrast between the life of fifty years ago and that of to-day than in these matters of preventive medicine, of surgery, and of sanitation; and it is worth recalling that these advances have come, not through the professional physician or surgeon, but through the laboratory investigations of the chemist and of the physicist. Applied chemistry and physics are the sources from which our sanitary and surgical gains have resulted.

A no less striking application of science in this half-century is to be found in those matters which affect transportation, whether on land or sea. Within this brief span of a generation and half, steam transportation has been so enormously advanced that the

transit of the largest oceans has become little more than a pleasure trip. Within this period the first electric car was set rolling over the earth's surface, and the whole development of modern transportation, including the automobile, belongs to this half-century.

Equally impressive, but not so often referred to, are the applications of science in the transmission of intelligence. Fifty years ago the land telegraph was in its infancy, and its use was restricted to messages of pressing business importance. Within the span of time of which we are speaking, the telegraph has been developed into an indispensable adjunct of every civilized man's business. Submarine cables extended under the sea connect all the continents of the earth. Not only have these enormous changes come, but the invention of the telephone makes it possible to transmit the human voice across the space of hundreds of miles; and finally, as a first-fruit of the twentieth-century inventor's work, wireless telegraphy sends its messages through the air from the distant ship to the shore. These applications, which enable each civilized man to know the business of all the rest, are to have an effect on our mode of life, on our relations with other nations, and on the general culture of civilized world, such as we perhaps cannot even to-day imagine. One of the results of this development in America is the modern newspaper, filled with news from the ends of the earth. The ease of transmission makes it possible to report not only the important things, but the scandal and the gossip, each item of which ought to die in its own cradle. The modern sensational paper is one of the unripe fruits of the scientific applications of our age. Social development in the last half-century has lagged behind scientific progress

and application. The education of the American people in obedience to law and in framing effective legislation for the distribution of the proceeds of production are far behind the scientific efficiency of the age. A serious question of civilization is, "How may the nation be rightly educated and wisely led, to the end that the tremendous productivity of applied science may ennoble and enrich, rather than vulgarize and corrupt it?"

*The Effect of Modern Scientific Research on the Religious Faith and the Philosophy of Life of the Civilized World.*

It is not too much to say that the development of science in these last five decades has produced a greater effect upon the beliefs and the philosophy of civilized man than that of all the centuries preceding. Fifty years ago the scientific world stood upon the brink of a great philosophical conception as to the origin of the system of nature which we see about us. The epoch-making work of Laplace and his contemporary mathematicians upon the development of the solar system, the researches of Lyell concerning the history of our own earth, the work of Buffon and Lamarck, the reflections of the earlier thinkers, like Leibnitz, Schelling, and Kant, all served in their respective branches of science to prepare the world for some generalizations as to the origin of life and the variations of living forms. In human history there had been recognized an evolution, one form of institution growing out of another, one race out of another, one language out of another. The evidence was beginning to be cumulative that the present is the child of the past, and that the living creatures which we see

about us have been evolved, being descendants of ancestral forms on the whole simpler; that those ancestors were descended from still simpler forms, and so on backward. What was needed in 1857 was some well-grounded, intelligible explanation of the variation of species. This explanation came in 1859 in the publication of Charles Darwin's epoch-making book, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Darwin showed that in natural selection, or what has also been called "the survival of the fittest," is found a natural process which results in the preservation of favorable variations. This process leads to the modification of each creature in relation to its organic conditions of life, and in most cases the change may be regarded as an advance in organization. "Darwinism" is not to be confused with "evolution." Darwin's name has been given to one particular interpretation of the process of evolution. The actual fact of development is proved from so many converging lines that there can be no doubt of the fact itself, although the future growth of our ideas may largely modify the explanation that Darwin has given of it.

Perhaps no single work has produced so great an impression upon the spirit of any age as has Darwin's memorable book upon the intellectual life of Europe and America. The book became at first the centre of a fierce intellectual discussion. Scientific men themselves were divided in their estimate of its importance and its soundness. In Boston, before the American Academy of Science and Arts, there went on during the winter of 1859 and 1860 one of the most spirited scientific debates which our country has ever known, between Professor Louis Agassiz in opposition to Darwin's theory and Professor William A. Rogers in

favor of it. Both were eloquent men, both were eminent in science, and perhaps no series of discussions before a scientific body has been more interesting than those which these two great men carried on at this time.

The outcome of the work of Darwin and his successors has been the practical acceptance by civilized men of the general theory of evolution, however they may differ about the process itself. While the work of the scientific men who have built up the doctrine of evolution, which to-day stands more firmly than ever as a reasonable interpretation of organic nature, was a scientific one and had nothing to do with ultimate problems, nevertheless it was inevitable that such a theory should excite the strongest opposition on the part of the theology of that day. The acrimony of that discussion has long since worn away. Men have had in fifty years a breathing time sufficient to see that however opposed such an explanation of nature may be to the then accepted orthodox theory of creation, neither one nor the other was necessarily connected with true religious life. To-day, in one form or another, nearly all educated men accept the general theory of evolution as the process by which the universe has been developed.

The chief effect, however, of the advance of science during these fifty years upon religious belief and the philosophy of life has come, not so much from the acceptance of the theory of evolution, or the conservation of energy, or other scientific deductions, but rather from the development of what is commonly called "the scientific spirit." To-day a thousand men are working in the investigations of science

where ten were working fifty years ago. These men form a far larger proportion of the whole community of intelligent men than they did a half-century ago, and their influence upon the thought of the race is greatly increased. They have been trained in a generation taught to question all processes, to hold fast only to those things that will bear proof, and to seek for the truth as the one thing worth having. It is this attitude of mind which makes the scientific spirit, and it is the widespread dissemination of this spirit which has affected the attitude of the great mass of civilized men toward formal theology and toward a general philosophy of life. The ability to believe, and even the disposition to believe, is one of the oldest acquirements of the human mind. On the other hand, the capacity for estimating evidence in cases of physical causation has been a recent acquisition. The last fifty years has added enormously to the power of the race in this capacity, and in the consequent demand on the part of all men for trustworthy evidence, not only in the case of physical phenomena, but in all other matters. This spirit is to-day the dominant note of the twentieth century. It is a serious spirit and a reverent one, but it demands to know, and it will be satisfied with no answer which does not squarely face the facts. This intellectual gain is the most note-worthy fruitage of the last fifty years of science and of scientific freedom.

A direct outcome of this development of scientific spirit has been the growth of what has come to be called the higher criticism. The higher criticism is a science whose aim is the determination of the literary history of books and writings, including

inquiries into the literary form, the unity, the date of publication, the authorship, the method of composition, the integrity and amount of care shown in any subsequent editing, and into other matters, such as may be discovered by the use of the internal evidence presented in the writing itself. It is termed the higher criticism to distinguish it from the related science of lower, or textual, criticism. This science is almost wholly a child of the last half-century, and in particular is this true so far as Biblical study and criticism are concerned. The development of this school of study along scientific lines has, in connection with the wide spread of the scientific spirit itself, had an enormous effect on the attitude of civilized man toward formal theology and toward formal religious organizations.

What the outcome of this intellectual development will be, whether it will result in a change of the organizations themselves or the evolution of new organizations for religious teaching along other lines than those which now exist, no one to-day can say. Of this much, however, we may be fairly sure: that although the work of the evolutionists and the higher critics may have affected formal theology, there is no reason for belief that the innate religious spirit of mankind has been weakened. True religion is a life, not a belief; and the religious life of the twentieth century promises to be as deep and genuine, and perhaps more satisfactory, than that of the century before. To-day the figure of Jesus Christ looms larger to the world than it did fifty years ago, and partly for the reason that his life and work are being studied apart from formal theology and independently of formal religious organizations.

The general effect of the whole evolutionary development of the last fifty years upon the philosophy of life of civilized man has been a hopeful one. The old theology pointed man to a race history in which he was represented as having fallen from a high estate to a low one. The philosophy of evolution encourages him to believe that, notwithstanding the limitations which come from a brute ancestry, his course has been upward, and he looks forward to-day hopefully and confidently to a like development in the future.

One who looks over this half-century of development of science cannot but feel something of this hopefulness as he looks forward to the half-century just begun. So little do we know of nature and of nature's laws, so large is their intent in comparison, that we may confidently expect the discoveries of the next half-century to more than equal those of the half-century just passed. The applications of chemistry and of physics are now being pushed by thousands of men better trained for research than in any generation which preceded. Organized effort in scientific research is begun; transportation, already so highly developed, will become still more convenient. Preventive medicine may well be expected to make enormous strides in the struggle with the great plagues of mankind. The whole scale of human living, so far as comfort and convenience are concerned, we may confidently expect to improve as rapidly as it has in the fifty years gone by. The house of 1950 will be as much superior in comfort and convenience to our homes of to-day as these are to those of a half-century ago.

Finally, we may be sure that during the next

fifty years, as during the past, that question which will most interest man is the old one, What is life, and how came it to be? This question has not yet been answered by any fruitful hypothesis like those of Darwin or Lamarck, which have been such effective tools in the hands of investigators. In the aid of the solution of this problem all scientific men are working, either consciously or unconsciously. Much of what they do seems trivial and dry in the eyes of those who are occupied with other thoughts. The man who is engaged in accumulating a million dollars may not easily understand how a student will toil patiently in a laboratory, laboriously gathering together minute data, in order that the generalizers of science may go a step farther in the solution of the problem. To-day the world stands firmly convinced of the universal force of the principle of evolution, and on the other hand looks forward to the realization of independent life and action in the separate cell. Whether in the next half-century science may be able to vanquish the difficulty presented by the atom of living potential protoplasm, the cell, we cannot say, but we may feel sure that great steps toward its solution will be made, and that these steps will be taken in the service of the truth for the truth's sake, which is the watchword of the science of to-day.

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## Maxim Gorky (born 1868)

### CHELKASH\*

The blue southern sky was bedimmed by the dust rising from the haven; the burning sun looked dully down into the greenish sea as if through a thin grey veil. It could not reflect itself in the water, which indeed was cut up by the strokes of oars and the furrows made by steam-screws and the sharp keels of Turkish feluccas and other sailing vessels, ploughing up in every direction the crowded harbour in which the free billows of the sea were confined within fetters of granite and crushed beneath the huge weights gliding over their crests, though they beat against the sides of the ships, beat against the shore, beat themselves into raging foam—foam begrimed by all sorts of floating rubbish.

The sound of the anchor chains, the clang of the couplings of the trucks laden with heavy goods, the metallic wail of the iron plates falling on the stone flagging, the dull thud of timber, the droning of the carrier-wagons, the screaming of the sirens of the steamships, now piercingly keen, now sinking to a dull roar, the cries of the porters, sailors, and custom-house officers—all these sounds blended into the deafening symphony of the laborious day, and vibrating restlessly, remained stationary in the sky over

\* From *Tales from Gorky* by kind permission of Jarrolds, Publishers (London), Ltd.

the haven, as if fearing to mount higher and disappear. And there ascended from the earth, continually, fresh and ever fresh waves of sound—some dull and mysterious, and these vibrated sullenly all around, others clangorous and piercing which rent the dusty sultry air.

Granite, iron, the stone haven, the vessels and the people—everything is uttering in mighty tones a madly passionate hymn to Mercury. But the voices of the people, weak and overborne, are scarce audible therein. And the people themselves to whom all this hubbub is primarily due, are ridiculous and pitiful. Their little figures, dusty, strenuous, wriggling into and out of sight, bent double beneath the burden of heavy goods lying on their shoulders, beneath the burden of the labour of dragging these loads hither and thither in clouds of dust, in a sea of heat and racket—are so tiny and insignificant in comparison with the iron colossi surrounding them, in comparison with the loads of goods, the rumbling wagons, and all the other things which these same little creature have made! Their own handiwork has subjugated and degraded them.

Standing by the quays, heavy giant steamships are now whistling, now hissing, now deeply snorting, and in every sound given forth by them there seems to be a note of ironical contempt for the grey, dusty little figures of the people crowding about on the decks, and filling the deep holds with the products of their slavish labour. Laughable even to tears are the long strings of dockyard men, dragging after them tens of thousands of pounds of bread and pitching them into the iron bellies of the vessels in order to earn a few pounds of that very same bread for

their own stomachs—people, unfortunately, not made of iron and feeling the pangs of hunger. These hustled, sweated crowds, stupefied by weariness and by the racket and heat, and these powerful machines, made by these selfsame people, basking, sleek and unruffled, in the sunshine—machines which, in the first instance, are set in motion not by steam, but by the muscles and blood of their makers—in such a juxtaposition there was a whole epic of cold and cruel irony.

The din is overwhelming, the dust irritates the nostrils and blinds the eyes, the heat burns and exhausts the body, and everything around—the buildings, the people, the stone quays—seem to be on the stretch, full-ripe, ready to burst, ready to lose all patience and explode in some grandiose catastrophe, like a volcano, and thus one feels that one would be able to breathe more easily and freely in the refreshed air; one feels that then a stillness would reign upon the earth, and this dusty din, benumbing and irritating the nerves to the verge of melancholy mania, would vanish, and in the town, and on the sea, and in the sky, everything would be calm, clear, and glorious. But it only *seems* so. One fancies it *must* be so, because man has not yet wearied of hoping for better things, and the wish to feel himself free has not altogether died away within him.

Twelve measured and sonorous strokes of a bell resound. When the last brazen note has died away the wild music of labour has already diminished by at least a half. Another minute and it has passed into a dull involuntary murmur. The voices of men and the splashing of the sea have now become more audible. The dinner-hour has come.

## I

When the dock-hands, leaving off work, scatter along the haven in noisy groups, buying something to eat from the costermonger women and sitting down to their meal in the most shady corners of the macadamized quay, amidst them appears Greg Ubelkash, that old wolf of the pastures, well-known to the people of the haven as a confirmed toper and a bold and skilful thief. He is barefooted, in shabby old plush breeches, hatless, with a dirty cotton shirt with a torn collar, exposing his mobile, withered, knobbly legs in their cinnamon-brown case of skin. It is plain from his touzled back, grey-streaked hair and his keen wizened face that he has only just awoke. From one of his smutty moustaches a wisp of straw sticks out, the fellow to it has lost itself among the bristles of his recently shaved left cheek, and behind his ear he has stuck a tiny linden twig just plucked from the tree. Lanky, bony, and somewhat crooked, he slowly shambled along the stones, and moving from side to side his hooked nose, which resembled the beak of a bird of prey, he cast around him sharp glances, twinkling at the same time his cold grey eyes as they searched for someone or other among the dockyard men. His dirty brown moustaches, long and thick, twitched just like a cat's whiskers, and his arms, folded behind his back, rubbed one against the other, while the long, crooked, hook-like fingers clutched at the air convulsively. Even here, in the midst of a hundred such ragged striking tatterdemalions as he, he immediately attracted attention by his resemblance to the vulture of the steppes, by his bird-of-prey-like haggardness, and that alert sort

of gait, easy and quiet in appearance, but inwardly the result of excited weariness, like the flight of the bird of prey he called to mind.

When he came alongside one of the groups of ragged porters sprawling in the shade beneath the shelter of the coal baskets, he suddenly encountered a broad-shouldered little fellow with a stupid pimply face and a neck scarred with scratches, evidently fresh from a sound and quite recent drubbing. He got up and joined Chelkash, saying to him in a subdued voice :

“ Goods belonging to the fleet have been missed in two places. They are searching for them still. Do you hear, Greg ! ”

“ Well ! ” asked Chelkash quietly, calmly measuring his comrade from head to foot.

“ What do you mean by well ? They’re searching I say, that’s all. ”

“ Are they asking me to help them in their search then ? ”

And Chelkash, with a shrewd smile, glanced in the direction of the lofty packhouse of the Volunteer Fleet.

“ Go to the devil ! ”

His comrade turned back.

“ Wait a bit ! What are you so stuck-up about ? Look how they’ve spoiled the whole show ! I don’t see Mike here ! ”

“ Have’nt seen him for a long time, ” said the other, going back to his companions.

Chelkash went on further, greeted by everyone like a man well-known. And he, always merry with a biting repartee, to-day was evidently not in a good humour, and gave abrupt and snappy answers.

At one point a custom-house officer, a dusty, dark-green man with the upright carriage of a soldier, emerged from behind a pile of goods. He barred Chelkash's way, standing in front of him with a challenging pose, and seizing with his left hand the handle of his dirk, tried to collar Chelkash with his right.

"Halt! whither are you going?"

Chelkash took a step backwards, raised his eyes to the level of the custom-house officer, and smiled drily.

The ruddy, good-humouredly-cunning face of the official tried to assume a threatening look, puffing out its cheeks till they were round and bloated, contracting its brows and goggling its eyes—and was supremely ridiculous in consequence.

"You have been told that you are not to dare to enter the haven, or I'd break your ribs for you. And here you are again!" cried the guardian of the customs threateningly.

"Good day, Semenich! we have not seen each other for a long time," calmly replied Chelkash, stretching out his hand.

"I wish it had been a whole century. Be off! Be off!"

But Semenich pressed the extended hand all the same.

"What a thing to say!" continued Chelkash, still retaining in his talon-like fingers the hand of Semenich, and shaking it in a friendly familiar sort of way—"have you seen Mike by any chance?"

"Mike, Mike? whom do you mean? I don't know any Mike. Go away, my friend! That pack-house officer is looking, he..."

"The red-haired chap, I mean, with whom I worked last time on board the 'Kostroma,' " persisted Chelkash.

"With whom you pilfered, you ought to say. They've carried your Mike off to the hospital if you must know; he injured his leg with a bit of iron. Go, my friend, while you are asked to go civilly; go, and I'll soon saddle you with him again!"

"Ah, look there now! and you said you did not know Mike! Tell me now, Semenich, why are you so angry?"

"Look here, Greg! none of your cheek! be off!"

The custom-house officer began to be angry, and glancing furtively around him, tried to tear his hand out of the powerful hand of Chelkash. Chelkash regarded him calmly from under his bushy brows, smiled to himself, and not releasing his hand, continued to speak:

"Don't hurry me! I'll have my say with you and then I'll go. Now tell me, how are you getting on?—Your wife, your children, are they well?"—and, twinkling his eyes maliciously and biting his lips, with a mocking smile, he added: "I was going to pay you a visit, but I never had the time—I was always on the booze..."

"Well, well, drop that!—none of your larks, you bony devil!—I'm really your friend...I suppose you're laying yourself out to nab something under cover or in the streets?"

"Why so? Here and now I tell a good time's coming for both you and me, if only we lay hold of a bit. In God's name, Semenich, lay hold! Listen now, again in two places goods are missing! Look

out now, Semenich, and be very cautious lest you come upon them somehow!"

Utterly confused by the audacity of Chelkash, Semenich trembled all over, spat freely about him, and tried to say something. Chelkash let go his hand and calmly shuffled back to the dock gates with long strides, the custom-house officer, cursing fiercely, moved after him.

Chelkash was now in a merry mood. He softly whistled through his teeth, and burying his hands into his breeches' pockets, marched along with the easy gait of a free man, distributing sundry jests and repartees right and left. And the people he left behind paid him out in his own coin as he passed by.

"Hellow, Chelkash! how well the authorities mount guard over you!" howled someone from among the group of dock-workers who had already dined and were resting at full length on the ground.

"I'm barefooted you see, so Semenich follows behind so as not to tread upon my toes—he might hurt me and lay me up for a bit," replied Chelkash.

They reached the gates, two soldiers searched Chelkash and hustled him gently into the street.

"Don't let him go!" bawled Semenich, stopping at the dockyard gate.

Chelkash crossed the road and sat down on a post opposite the door of a pot-house. Out of the dockyard gates, lowing as they went, proceeded an endless string of laden oxen, meeting the returning teams of unladen oxen with their drivers mounted upon them. The haven vomited forth thunderous noise and stinging dust, and the ground trembled.

Inured to this frantic hurly-burly, Chelkash, stimulated by the scene with Semenich, felt in the

best of spirits. Before him smiled a solid piece of work, demanding not very much labour but a good deal of cunning. He was convinced that he would be equal to it, and blinking his eyes, fell thinking how he would lord it to-morrow morning, when the whole thing would have been managed and the bank-notes would be in his pocket. Then he called to mind his comrade Mike, who would have just done for this night's job if he had not broken his leg. Chelkash cursed inwardly that, without Mike's help, it would be a pretty stiffish job for him alone. What sort of a night was it going to be? He looked up at the sky and then all down the street...

Six paces away from him on the macadamized pavement, with his back against a post, sat a young lad in a blue striped shirt, hose to match, with bast shoes and a ragged red forage cap. Near him lay a small knapsack and a scythe without a handle wrapped up in straw carefully wound round with cord. The lad was broad-shouldered, sturdy and fair-haired, with a tanned and weather-beaten face, and with large blue eyes gazing at Chelkash confidently and good-naturedly...

Chelkash ground his teeth, protruded his tongue, and making a frightful grimace, set himself to gaze fixedly at the youth with goggling eyes.

The youth, doubtful, at first, what to make of it, blinked a good deal, but suddenly bursting into a fit of laughter, screamed in the midst of his laughter: "Ah, what a character!" and scarce rising from the ground, rolled clumsily from his own to Chelkash's post, dragging his knapsack along through the dust and striking the blade of the scythe against a stone.

"What, brother, enjoying yourself, eh? Good health to you!" said he to Chelkash, plucking his trouser.

"There's a job on hand, my sucking pig, and such a job!" confessed Chelkash openly. He liked the look of this wholesome, good-natured lad with the childish blue eyes. "Been a-mowing, eh?"

"Pretty mowing! mow a furlong and earn a farthing! Bad business that! The very hungriest come crowding in, and they lower wages though they don't gain any. They pay six grivenik\* in the Kuban here—a pretty wage! Formerly they paid, people say, three silver roubles, four, nay five!"

"Formerly!—Ah, formerly, at the mere sight of a Russian man they paid up splendidly there. I worked at the same job myself ten years ago. You went up to the cossack station—here am I, a Russian! you said, and immediately they looked at you, felt you, marvelled at you, and—three roubles down into your palm straightway! Those were the days for eating and drinking. And you lived pretty much as you liked."

The lad listened to Chelkash at first with wide-open mouth, with puzzled rapture writ large on his rotund physiognomy; but, presently, understanding that this ragamuffin was joking, he closed his lips with a snap and laughed aloud. Chelkash preserved a serious countenance, concealing his smile in his moustaches.

"Rum card that you are! you spoke as if it were true, and I listened and believed you. Now, God knows, formerly..."

\* A grivenik is a 10 kopeck piece=1/10th of a silver rouble.  
A silver rouble=2s.

"But I count for something, don't I? I tell you that formerly..."

"Go along!" said the lad, waving his hand. "I suppose you're a cobbler?—or are you a tailor? *What* are you?"

"What am I?" repeated Chelkash, reflecting a little—"I'm a fisherman!" he said at last.

"A fisherman! really?—you really catch fish?"

"Why fish? The fishermen here don't only catch fish. There's more than that. There are drowned corpses, old anchors, sunken ships—everything! There are hooks for fishing up all sorts..."

"Nonsense, nonsense! I suppose you mean the sort of fishermen who sang of themselves:

"Our nets we cast forth abroad  
On the river bank so high,  
And in storehouse and grain loft so high..."

"And you have seen such like, eh?" inquired Chelkash, looking at him with a smile and thinking to himself that this fine young chap was really very stupid.

"No, where could I see them? But I've heard of them..."

"Like the life, eh?"

"Like their life? Well, how shall I put it?—they are not bothered with kids...they live as they like...they are free..."

"What do you know about freedom? Do you love it?"

"Why, of course. To be your own master...to go where you like...to do what you like. Still more, if you know how to keep straight, and have no stone

about your neck...then it's splendid! You may enjoy yourself as you like, if only you don't forget God..."

Chelkash spat contemptuously, ceased from questioning, and turned away from the youth.

"I'll tell you my story," said the other with a sudden burst of confidence. "When my father died he left but little, my mother was old, the land was all ploughed to death, what was I to do? Live I must—but how? I didn't know. I went to my wife's relations—a good house. Very well! 'Will you give your daughter her portion?' But no, my devil of a father-in-law would not shell out. I was worrying him a long time about it—a whole year. What a business it was! And if I had had a hundred and fifty roubles in hand I could have paid off the Jew Antipas and stood on my legs again. 'Will you give Marfa her portion?' I said. 'No? Very well! Thank God she is not the only girl in the village.' I wanted to let him know that I would be my own master and quite free. Heigh-ho!" And the young fellow sighed. "And now there is nothing for it but to go to my relations after all. I had thought: look now! I'll go to the Kuban District. I'll scrape together two hundred roubles—and then I shall be a gentleman at large. But it was only so-so! It all ended in smoke. Now you'll have to go back to your relations, I said to myself... as a day-labourer. I'm not fit to be my own master—no. I'm quite unfit. Alas! Alas!"

The young fellow had a violent disinclination to go to his relatives. Even his cheerful face grew dark and made itself miserable. He shifted heavily about on the ground and drew Chelkash out of the reverie in which he had plunged while the other was talking.

Chelkash also began to feel that the conversation was boring him, yet, for all that, he asked a few more questions :

“ And now where are you going ? ”

“ Where am I going ? Why, home of course . ”

“ My friend, it is not ‘ of course ’ to me. You might be going to kick up your heels in Turkey for aught I know . ”

“ In Tur-tur-key ? ” stammered the youth. “ Who of all the Orthodox would think of going there ? What do you mean ? ”

“ I mean that you’re a fool ! ” sighed Chelkash, and again he turned away from the speaker, and this time he felt an utter disinclination to waste another word upon him. There was something in this healthy country lad which revolted him.

A troublesome, slowly ripening irritating feeling was stirring somewhere deep within him, and prevented him from concentrating his attention and meditating on all that had to be done that night.

The snubbed young rustic kept murmuring to himself in a low voice, now and then glancing furtively at the vagabond. His cheeks were absurdly chubby ; his lips were parted ; and his lackadaisical eyes blinked ridiculously and preposterously often. Evidently he had never expected that his conversation with this moustached ragamuffin would have been terminated so quickly and so offensively.

The ragamuffin no longer paid him the slightest attention. He was whistling reflectively as he sat on the post and beating time with his naked dirty paw.

The rustic wanted to be quits with him.

"I say, fisherman, do you often get drunk?"—he was beginning, when the same instant the fisherman turned round quickly face to face with him and asked:

"Hark ye, baby! Will you work with me to-night? Come! yes or no?"

"Work at what?" inquired the rustic suspiciously.

"At whatever work I give you. We'll go a-fishing. You'll have to row..."

"Oh!.....All right!.....No matter. I can work. Only don't let me in for something.....You're so frightfully double-tongued.....you're a dark horse..."

Chelkash began to feel something of the nature of a gangrened wound in his breast, and murmured with cold maliciousness:

"No blabbing, whatever you may think. Look now, I've a good mind to knock your blockhead about till I drive some light into it."

He leaped from his post, and while his left hand still twirled his moustache, he clenched his right into a muscular fist as hard as iron, while his eyes flashed and sparkled.

The rustic was terrified. He quickly looked about him, and timidly blinking his eyes, also leapt from the ground. They both stood there regarding each other in silence.

"Well?" inquired Chelkash sullenly, he was boiling over and tremulous at the insult received from this young bull-calf, whom during the whole course of their conversation he had despised, but whom he now thoroughly hated because he had such clear blue eyes, such a healthy sun-burnt face, such

short strong arms. He hated him, moreover, because, somewhere or other, he had his native village, and a house in it, and because he numbered among his relatives a well-to-do peasant farmer; he hated him for all his past life and all his life to come, and, more than all this, he hated him because this creature, a mere child in comparison with himself, Chelkash, dared to love freedom, whose value he knew not, and which was quite unnecessary to him. It is always unpleasant to see a man whom you regard as worse and lower than yourself, love or hate the same thing as you do, and thus become like unto yourself.

The rustic looked at Chelkash, and felt that in him he had found his master.

"Well..." he began, "I have nothing to say against it. I am glad, in fact...You see I am out of work. It is all one to me whom I work for, for you or another. I only mean to say that you don't look like a working man...you're so terribly ragged, you know. Well, I know that may happen to us all. Lord! the toppers I've seen in my time! No end to 'em! But I've never seen any like you."

"All right, all right! It is agreed then, eh?" asked Chelkash. His voice was now a little softer.

"With pleasure, so far as I am concerned. What's the pay?"

"I pay according to the amount of work done, and according to the kind of work too. It depends upon the haul. You might get a fifth part—what do you say to that?"

But now it was a matter of money, and therefore the peasant must needs be exact and demand the same exactness from his employer. The rustic had a fresh access of uncertainty and suspicion.

“ Nay, brother, ‘ a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush— ’ ”

Chelkash fell in with his humour.

“ No more gabble! Wait! come to the pub!”

And they walked along the street side by side, Chelkash twisting his moustaches with the impudent air of a master, the rustic with the expression of a complete readiness to buckle under, yet at the same time full of uneasiness and suspicion.

“ What do they call you?” inquired Chelkash.

“ Gabriel,” replied the rustic.

When they came to the filthy and smoke-black inn, Chelkash, going up to the buffet with the familiar tone of an old habitu   ordered a bottle of vodka, cabbage-soup, a roasted joint, tea; and totting up the amount of the items, curtly remarked to the barmaid! “ All to my account, eh?” whereupon the barmaid nodded her head in silence. And Gabriel was suddenly filled with profound respect for his master, who, notwithstanding his hang-dog look, enjoyed such notoriety and credit.

“ Well, now we can peck a bit, and have a talk comfortably. You sit here. I’ll be back directly.”

Out he went. Gabriel looked about him. The inn was on the ground-floor, it was damp and dark and full of the stifling odour of distilled vodka, tobacco smoke, tar, and a something else of a pungent quality. Opposite Gabriel, at another table, sat a drunken man in sailor’s costume, with a red beard, all covered with coal dust and tar. He was growling, in the midst of momentary hiccoughs, a song, or rather the fragmentary and inconsecutive words of a song, his voice now rising to a frightful

bellow, now sinking to a throaty gurgle. He was obviously not a Russian.

Behind him sat two young Moldavian girls, ragged, dark-haired, sun-burnt, also screeching some sort of a song with tipsy voices.

Further back other figures projected from the surrounding gloom, all of them strangely unkempt, half-drunk, noisy, and restless...

Gabriel felt uncomfortable sitting there all alone. He wished his master would return sooner. The din of the eating-house blended into a single note, and it seemed to him like the roar of some huge animal. It possessed a hundred different sorts of voices, and was blindly, irritably, soaring away out of this stony prison, as if it wanted to find an outlet for its will and could not... Gabriel felt as if something bemused and oppressive was sucking away in his body, something which made his head swim, and made his eyes grow dim as they wandered, curious and terrified, about the eating-house.

Chelkash now arrived, and they began to eat and drink and converse at the same time. At the third rummer Gabriel got drunk. He felt merry, and wanted to say something pleasant to his host who—glorious youth!—though nothing to look at, was so tastefully entertaining him. But the words, whole waves of them, pouring into his very throat, for some reason or other wouldn't leave his tongue, which had suddenly grown quite cumbersome.

Chelkash looked at him, and said with a derisive smile: "Why, you're drunk already! What a milksop! And only the fifth glass too! How will you manage to work?"

"My friend," lisped Gabriel, "never fear. I

respect you—there you are. Let me kiss you. Ah!”

“ Well, well—come, chink glasses once more.”

Gabriel went on drinking, and arrived at last at that stage when to his eyes everything began to vibrate with a regular spontaneous motion of its own. This was very disagreeable, and made him feel unwell. His face assumed a foolishly-ecstatic expression. He tried to say something, but only made a ridiculous noise with his lips and bellowed. Chelkash continued to gaze fixedly at him as if he was trying to recollect something, and twirled his moustaches, smiling all the time, but now his smile was grim and evil.

The eating-house was a babel of drunken voices. The red-haired sailor had gone to sleep with his elbows resting on the table.

“ Come now, let us go,” said Chelkash, standing up.

Gabriel tried to rise, but could not, and cursing loudly, began to laugh the senseless laugh of the drunkard.

“ He’ll have to be carried,” said Chelkash, sitting down again on the chair opposite his comrade.

Gabriel kept on laughing, and looked at his host with lack-lustre eyes. And the latter regarded him fixedly, keenly, and meditatively. He saw before him a man whose life had fallen into his vulpine paws. Chelkash felt that he could twist him round his little finger. He could break him in pieces like a bit of cardboard, or he could make a substantial peasant of him as solid as a picture in its frame. Feeling himself the other man’s master, he hugged himself with delight, and reflected that this rustic

had never emptied so many glasses as Fate had permitted him, Chelkash, to do. And he has a sort of indignant pity for this young life; he despised and even felt anxious about it, lest it should fall at some other time into such hands as his. And finally, all Chelkash's feelings blended together into one single sentiment—into something paternal and hospitable. He was sorry for the youth, and the youth was necessary to him. Then Chelkash took Gabriel under the armpits, and urging him lightly forward from behind with his knee, led him out of the door of the tavern, where he placed him on the ground in the shadow of a pile of wood, and himself sat down beside him and smoked his pipe. Gabriel rolled about for a bit, bellowed drunkenly, and dozed off.

## II

“ Well now, are you ready?” inquired Chelkash in a low voice of Gabriel, who was fumbling about with the oars.

“ Wait a moment. The row-locks are all waggly. Can I ship oars for a bit?”

“ No, no! Don't make noise! Press down more firmly with your hands, and they'll fall into place of their own accord.”

The pair of them were quietly making off with the skiff attached to the stern of one of a whole flotilla of sailing barques laden with batten rivets and large Turkish feluccas half unloaded and still half-filled with palm, sandal, and thick cypress-wood logs.

The night was dark, across the sky dense layers of ragged cloud were fitting, and the water was still, dark, and as thick as oil. It exhaled a moist, saline

aroma, and murmured caressingly as it splashed against the sides of the ships and against the shore, and rocked the skiff of Chelkash to and fro. Stretching a long distance seawards from the shore, rose the dark hulls of many vessels, piercing the sky with their sharp masts which had variegated lanterns in their tops. The sea reflected the lights of these lanterns, and was covered with a mass of yellow patches. They twinkled prettily on its soft, faint-black, velvet bosom, heaving so calmly, so powerfully. The sea was sleeping the sleep of a strong and healthy labourer wearied to death by the day's work.

"Let's be off," said Gabriel, thrusting the oar into the water.

"Go!" Chelkash, with a powerful thrust of his hand, thrust the skiff right into the strip of water behind the barques. The skiff flew swiftly through the smooth water, and the water, beneath the stroke of the oars, burned with a bluish, phosphorescent radiance. A long ribbon of this radiance, faintly gleaming, tapered away from the keel of the skiff.

"Well, how's the head? Aching, eh?" inquired Chelkash jocosely.

"Frightfully. It hums like molten iron. I'll wash it with water presently."

"Why? What you want is something to go inside. Take a pull at that—that will soon put you all right," and he handed Gabriel a flask.

"Oh-ho! Lord bless you!"

A gentle gurgle was audible.

"How now? Feel glad, eh? Stop, that'll do!"

The skiff sped on again, lightly and noiselessly, turning and winding among the vessels. Suddenly it wrenched itself free from them, and the sea—the

endless, mighty, glistening sea—lay extended before them, receding into the blue distance, whence there arose out of its waters mountains of cloud of a dark lilac-blue, with yellowish downy fringes at the corners, and greenish clouds the colour of sea water, and those melancholy leaden clouds which cast abroad such heavy, oppressive shadows, crushing down mind and spirit. They crept so slowly away from one another, and now blending with, now pursuing one another, intermingled their shapes and colours, swallowing each other up and re-emerging in fresh shapes, magnificent and menacing... And there was something mysterious in the gradual motion of these lifeless masses. There seemed to be an infinite host of them at the verge of the sea-shore, and it seemed as if they must always creep indifferently over the face of Heaven, with the sullen evil aim of obliterating it, and never allowing it to shine down again upon the sleeping sea with its millions of golden eyes, the many-coloured living stars that sparkle so dreamily, awakening lofty desires in those to whom their pure and holy radiance is so precious.

“The sea’s good ain’t it?” inquired Chelkash.

“Rubbish! it’s horrible to me,” replied Gabriel, as his oars struck the water vigorously and symmetrically. The water splashed and gurgled with a scarcely audible sound beneath the strokes of the long oars—splashing and splashing, and sparkling with its warm blue phosphorescent light.

“Horrible! do you say? Ugh, you fool!” exclaimed Chelkash contemptuously.

He, thief and cynic, loved the sea. His excitable, nervous nature, greedy of new impressions, was never tired of contemplating that dark expanse, limitless,

free, and mighty. And it offended him to receive such an answer to his question as to the loveliness of the thing he loved. Sitting in the stern, he cut the water with his oar, and looked calmly in front of him, full of the desire to go long and far in that velvety smoothness.

On the sea there always arose within him a broad, warm feeling embracing his whole soul, and, for a time, purifying him from the filth of earthly life. This feeling he prized, and he loved to see himself better there, in the midst of the water and the air, where thoughts of life and life itself always lost first their keenness and then their value. At night on the sea can be heard the soft murmur of the sea's slumberous breathing, that incomprehensible sound which pours peace into the soul of man, and caressingly taming his evil impulses, awakes within him mighty musings.....

"But where's the tackle, eh?" inquired Gabriel suddenly, looking uneasily about the boat.

Chelkash started violently.

"The tackle?—it is with me in the stern of the boat."

"What sort of tackle is that?" Gabriel again inquired, this time with suspicion in his voice.

"What tackle? Why, ground tackle and—"

But Chelkash felt ashamed to lie to this youngster while concealing his real project, and he regretted the thoughts and feelings which the question of this rustic had suddenly annihilated. He grew angry. A familiar, sharp, burning sensation in his breast and throat convulsed him, and he said to Gabriel with suppressed fury:

“Mind your own business, and don’t thrust your nose into other folk’s affairs. You are hired to row—so row. If your tongue wags again it will be the worse for you. Do you understand?” For a moment the skiff rocked to and fro, and stood still. The oars remained in the water feathering it, and Gabriel moved uneasily on his bench.

“Row!”

Violent abuse shook the air. Gabriel grasped the oars. The skiff, as if terrified, fared along with quick, nervous jolts, noisily cutting through the water.

“Steadier!”

Chelkash rose a little from his seat in the stern, without letting go his oar, and fixed his cold eyes on the pale face and trembling lips of Gabriel. Bending forward with arched back he resembled a cat about to spring. Perfectly audible was the savage grinding of his teeth, and also a timorous clattering as if of bones.

“Who calls?” resounded a surly shout from the sea.

“Devil take it!—row, can’t you? Quiet with the oars! I’ll kill you, you hound! Row, I say! One, two! You dare to whisper, that’s all!” whispered Chelkash.

“Mother of God! Holy Virgin!” whispered Gabriel, trembling and helpless with terror and over-exertion.

The skiff turned and went lightly back towards the haven, where the lights of the lanterns were jogging together in a particoloured group, and the shafts of the masts were visible.

“Hie! who was making that row?” the voice sounded again. This time it was further off than before. Chelkash felt easier.

"You're making all the row yourself, my friend!" he cried in the direction of the voice, and then he turned again to Gabriel, who was still muttering a prayer: "Well, my friend, you're in luck! If those devils had come after us there would have been an end of you! Do you hear? I'd have thrown you to the fishes in a twinkling!"

Now when Chelkash spoke calmly, and even good-naturedly, Gabriel trembled still more with terror and fell to beseeching.

"Listen! Let me go! For Christ's sake let me go! Land me somewhere—oh, oh, oh! I'm ruined altogether. Now, in the name of God, let me go! What am I to you? I'm not up to it. I'm not used to such things. It's the very first time. Oh, Lord! It's all up with me! How could you so deceive me, my friend? It is wilful of you. You have lost your soul. A pretty business."

"What business do you mean?" asked Chelkash surlily. "Ha! What business, eh?"

He was amused at the terror of the rustic, and he took a delight in Gabriel's terror, because it showed what a terrible fellow he, Chelkash, was.

"A dark business, my friend! Let me go, for God's sake. What harm have I done you?..... Mercy...!"

"Silence! If you were of no use to me I would not have taken you. Do you understand?—And now be quiet!"

"Oh, Lord!" sighed the sobbing Gabriel.

"Come, come! Don't blubber!" Chelkash rounded on him sternly.

But Gabriel could no longer restrain himself, and sobbing softly, wept and snivelled and fidgeted on his

seat, but rowed vigorously, desperately. The skiff sped along like a dart. Again the dark hulls of big vessels stood in their way, and the skiff lost itself among them, turning like a top in the narrow streaks of water between the vessels.

"Hie you! Listen! If anyone asks you anything, hold your tongue, if you want to remain alive! Do you understand?"

"Woe is me!" sighed Gabriel hopelessly in reply to the stern command, adding bitterly: "My accursed luck!"

"Now row!" said Chelkash in an intense curdling whisper.

At this whisper Gabriel lost all capacity for forming any ideas whatsoever, and became more dead than alive, benumbed by a cold presentiment of coming evil. He mechanically lowered his oars into the water, leaned back his uttermost, took a long pull, and set steadily to work again, gazing stolidly all the time at his bast shoes.

The sleepy murmur of the waves had now a sullen sound and became terrible. They were in the haven... Behind its granite wall could be heard people's voices, the splashing of water, singing, and high-pitched whistling.

"Stop!" whispered Chelkash. "Ship oars! cling close to the wall! Hush, you devil!"

Gabriel, grasping the slippery stones with his hands, drew the skiff up alongside the wall. The skiff moved without any grating, its keel gliding noiselessly over the slimy seaweed growing on the stones.

"Stop! Give me the oars! Give them here! Where's your passport? In your knapsack? Hand

over the knapsack! Come, look sharp! It will be a good hostage for your not bolting! You'll not bolt now, I know! Without the oars you might bolt somewhere, but without the passport you'd be afraid to. Wait, and look here, if you whine—to the bottom of the sea you go!"

And suddenly clinging to something with his hands, Chelkash rose in the air and disappeared over the wall.

Gabriel trembled...It was done so smartly. He began to feel the cursed oppression and terror which he felt in the presence of that evil moustached thief, rolling, creeping off him. Now was the time to run!... With a sigh of relief he looked about him. To the left of him rose a black mastless hull, a sort of immense tomb, unpeopled and desolate. Every stroke of the billows against its side awoke within it a hollow, hollow echo, like a heavy sigh. To the right of him on the water, stretching right away, was the grey stony wall of the mole, like a cold and massive serpent. Behind, some black bodies were also visible, and in front, in the opening between the wall and the hull of the floating tomb, the sea was visible, dumb and dreary with black clouds all over it. Huge and heavy, they were moving slowly along, drawing their horror from the gloom and ready to stifle man beneath their heaviness. Everything was cold, black, and of evil omen. Gabriel felt terrified. This terror was worse than the terror inspired by Chelkash, it grasped the bosom of Gabriel in a strong embrace, made him collapse into a timid lump, and nailed him to the bench of the skiff.

And around him all was silent, not a sound save the sighing of the sea, and it seemed as if this silence

were broken upon by something terrible, something insanely loud, by something which shook the sea to its very foundation, tore asunder the heavy flocks of clouds in the sky, and scattered over the wilderness of the sea all those heavy vessels. The clouds crept along the sky just as gradually and wearily as before; but more and more of them kept rising from the sea, and, looking at the sky, one might fancy that it also was a sea, but a sea in insurrection against and falling upon the other so slumberous, peaceful, and smooth. The clouds resembled billows pouring upon the earth with grey inwardly-curling crests; they resembled an abyss, from which these billows were torn forth by the wind; they resembled new-born breakers still covered with greenish foam of rage and frenzy.

Gabriel felt himself overwhelmed by this murky silence and beauty; he felt that he would like to see his master again soon. Why was he staying away there? The time passed slowly, more slowly even than the clouds crawling across the sky ... And the silence as time went on became more and more ominous. But now from behind the wall of the mole a splashing, a rustling, and something like a whispering became audible. It seemed to Gabriel as if he must die on the spot.

“Hie! Are you asleep? Catch hold!” sounded the hollow voice of Chelkash cautiously.

Something round and heavy was let down from the wall, Gabriel hauled it into the boat. Another similar thing was let down. Then across the wall stretched the long lean figure of Chelkash, then from somewhither appeared the oars, Gabriel’s

knapsack plumped down at his feet, and heavily breathing Chelkash was sitting in the stern.

Gabriel looked at him and smiled joyfully and timidly.

“Tired?” he asked.

“A bit, you calf! Come, take the oars and put your whole heart into it. A bit of work will do you no harm, my friend. The work’s half done, now we’ve only got to swim a bit under their very noses, and then you shall have your money and go to your Polly. You have a Polly, haven’t you? Eh, baby?”

Gabriel did his very utmost, working with a breast like shaggy fur and with arms like steel springs. The water foamed beneath the skiff, and the blue strip behind the stern now became broader. Gabriel was presently covered with sweat, but kept on rowing with all his might. Experiencing such terror twice in one night, he feared to experience it a third time, and only wished for one thing: to be quite out of his cursed work, land on *terra firma*, and run away from this man before he killed him downright, or got him locked up in jail. He resolved to hold no conversation with him, to contradict him in nothing, to do all he commanded, and if he were fortunate enough to break away from him, he vowed to offer up a prayer to St. Nicholas, the Wonder Worker, on the morrow. A passionate prayer was ready to pour from his breast.....But he controlled himself, panted like a steam-engine, and was silent, casting sidelong glances at Chelkash from time to time.

And Chelkash, long, lean, leaning forward and resembling a bird ready to take to flight, glared

into the gloom in front of the boat with his vulture eyes, and moving his hooked beak from side to side, with one hand held the tiller firmly, while with the other he stroked his moustache, his features convulsed occasionally by the smiles that curled his thin lips. Chelkash was satisfied with his success, with himself, and with this rustic so terribly frightened by him, and now converted into his slave. He was enjoying in anticipation the spacious debauch of tomorrow, and now delighted in his power over this fresh young rustic impounded into his service. He saw how he was exerting himself, and he felt sorry for him, and wished to encourage him.

"Hie!" said he softly, with a smile, "got over your funk, eh?"

"It was nothing!" sighed Gabriel, squirming before him.

"You needn't lean so heavily on your oars now. Take it easy a bit. We've only got one more place to pass. Rest a bit."

Gabriel stopped short obediently, wiped the sweat off his face with his shirt-sleeve, and again thrust the oars into the water.

"Row more gently. Don't let the water blab about you! We have only the gate to pass. Softly, softly! We've serious people to deal with here, my friend. They may take it into their heads to joke a bit with their rifles. They might saddle you with such a swelling on your forehead that you wouldn't even be able to sing out: oh!"

The skiff now crept along upon the water almost noiselessly. Only from the oars dripped blue drops, and when they fell into the sea, tiny blue spots lingered for an instant on the place where they fell.

The night grew even darker and stiller. The sky no longer resembled a sea in insurrection—the clouds had spread all over it and covered it with an even, heavy baldachin, drooping low and motionless over the sea. The sea grew still quieter, blacker, and exhaled a still stronger saline odour, nor did it seem so vast as heretofore.

“ Ah! if only the rain would come!” whispered Chelkash, “ it would be as good as a curtain for us.”

Right and left of them some sort of edifice now rose out of the black water—barges, immovable, sinister, and as black as the water itself. On one of them a fire was twinkling, and someone was going about with a lantern. The sea, washing their sides, sounded supplicatory and muffled, and they responded in a shrill and cold echo, as if quarrelsome and refusing to concede anything to it.

“ The cordons!” whispered Chelkash in a scarcely audible voice.

From the moment when he commanded Gabriel to row more gently, Gabriel was again dominated by a keen expectant tension. Onwards he kept, going through the gloom, and it seemed to him that he was growing—his bones and sinews were extending within him with a dull pain, his head, filled with a single thought, ached abominably, the skin on his back throbbed, and his feet were full of tiny, sharp, cold needles. His eyes were exhausted by gazing intently into the gloom, from which he expected to emerge every instant something which would cry to them with a hoarse voice: “ Stop, thieves!”

Now, when Chelkash whispered, “ The cordons!” Gabriel trembled, a keen burning thought ran through him, and settled upon his over-strained

nerves—he wanted to shout and call to people to help him. He had already opened his mouth, and, rising a little in the skiff, stuck out his breast, drew in a large volume of air, and opened his mouth..... but suddenly, overcome by a feeling of terror which struck him like the lash of whip, he closed his eyes and rolled off his bench.

In front of the skiff, far away on the horizon out of the black water, arose an enormous fiery-blue sword cutting athwart the night, gliding edgewise over the clouds on the sky, and lying on the bosom of the sea in a broad blue strip. There it lay, and into the zone of its radiance there floated out of the dark the hitherto invisible black vessels, all silent and enshrouded in the thick night mists. It seemed as if they had lain for long at the bottom of the sea, drawn down thither by the mighty power of the tempest, and now behold! they had risen from thence at the command of the fiery sea-born sword, risen to look at the sky and at all above the water. Their tackle hugged the masts, and seemed to be ends of seaweed risen from the depths together with these black giants immeshed within them. And again this strange gleaming blue sword arose from the surface of the sea, again it cut the night in twain, and flung itself in another direction. And again where it lay the dark hulls of vessels, invisible before its manifestation, floated out of the darkness.

The skiff of Chelkash stood still and rocked to and fro on the water as if irresolute. Gabriel lay at the bottom of it, covering his face with his hands, and Chelkash poked him with the oars and whispered furiously, but quietly :

" Fool! that's the custom-house cruiser. That is the electric lantern. Get up, you blockhead. The light will be thrown upon us in a moment. What the devil! you'll ruin me as well as yourself if you don't look out. Come!"

And at last when one of the blows with the sharp end of the oar caught Gabriel more violently than the others on the spine, he leaped up, still fearing to open his eyes, sat on the bench, blindly grasped the oars, and again set the boat in motion.

" Not so much noise! I'll kill you, I will! Not so much noise, I say. What a fool you are! Devil take you.....What are you afraid of? Now then, ugly! The lantern is a mirror—that's all! Softly with the oars, silly devil! They incline the mirror this way and that, and so light up the sea, in order that they may see whether folks like you and me, for instance, are sailing about anywhere. They do it to catch smugglers. They won't tackle us—they'll sail far away. Don't be afraid clodhopper, they won't tackle us. Now we're clear....." Chelkash looked round triumphantly....." At last we've sailed out of it! Phew! well you're lucky, blockhead!"

Gabriel kept silence, rowed and breathed heavily, still gazing furtively in the direction where that fiery sword kept on rising and falling. He could by no means believe Chelkash that it was only a lamp with a reflector. The cold blue gleam, cutting the darkness asunder and making the sea shine with a silvery radiance, had something incomprehensible in it, and Gabriel again fell into the hypnosis of anxious terror. And again a foreboding weighed heavily on his breast. He rowed like a machine, all huddled up, as if he expected a blow to come from above him; and

not a desire, not a single feeling remained in him—he was empty and spiritless. The agitation of this night had at last gnawed out of him everything human.

But Chelkash triumphed once more, the whole thing was a complete success. His nerves, accustomed to excitement, were already placid again. His moustaches quivered with rapture, and a hungry little flame was burning in his eyes. He felt magnificent, whistled between his teeth, drew a deep inspiration of the moist air of the sea, glanced around, and smiled good-naturedly when his eyes rested on Gabriel.

A breeze arose and awoke the sea, which suddenly began heaving sportively. The clouds seemed to make themselves thinner and more transparent, but the whole sky was obscured by them. Despite the fact that the wind, though but a light breeze, played over the sea, the clouds remained motionless, as if lost in some grey, grizzling meditation.

“Come, friend, wake up! It’s high time. Why, you looked as if your soul had evaporated through your skin, and only a bag of bones remained. Dear friend, I say! We’re pretty well at the end of this job, eh?”

It was pleasant to Gabriel, at any rate, to hear a human voice, even if the speaker were Chelkash.

“I hear,” he said softly.

“Very well, thick-head. Come now, take the rudder, and I’ll have a go at the oars. You seem tired. Come!”

Gabriel mechanically changed places. When Chelkash, in changing places with him, looked him in the face and observed that his tottering legs trembled

beneath him, he was still sorrier for the lad. He patted him on the shoulder.

"Well, well, don't be frightened. You have worked right well. I'll richly reward you, my friend. What say you to a fiver, eh?"

"I want nothing. Put me ashore, that's all."

Chelkash waved his hand, spat a bit, and began rowing, flinging the oars far back with his long arms.

The sea was waking. It was playing with tiny billows, producing them, adorning them with a fringe of foam, bumping them together, and beating them into fine dust. The foam, in dissolving, hissed and spluttered—and everything around was full of a musical hubbub and splashing. The gloom seemed to have more life in it.

"Now, tell me," said Chelkash, "I suppose you'll be off to your village, marry, plough up the soil, and sow corn, your wife will bear you children, and there won't be food enough. Now, tell me, do you mean to go on working your heart out all your life long? Say! There's not very much fun in that now, is there?"

"Fun indeed!" said Gabriel timidly and tremulously.

Here and there the wind had penetrated the clouds, and between the gaps peeped forth little patches of blue sky, with one or two little stars in them. Reflected by the sportive sea, these little stars leaped up and down on the waters, now vanishing and now shining forth again.

"Move to the right," said Chelkash; "we shall soon be there now, I hope. It's over now. An important little job, too. Look now—it's

like this, d'ye hear? In one single night I've grabbed half a thousand. What do you think of that, eh?"

"Half a thousand!" grasped Gabriel incredulously, but then terror again seized him, and kicking the bundle in the skiff, he asked quickly, "What sort of goods is this?"

"It's silk. Precious wares. If you sold all that at a fair price you would get a full thousand. But I'm not a shark! Smart, eh?"

"Ye-es!" gasped Gabriel. "If only it had been me," he sighed, all at once thinking of his village, and his poor household, his necessities, his mother, and everything belonging to his home so far away, for the sake of which he had gone to seek work—for the sake of which he had endured such torments this very night. A wave of reminiscence overwhelmed him, and he bethought him of his little village running down the steep slope of the hill, down to the stream hidden among the birches, silver willows, mountain-ashes, and wild cherry-trees. These reminiscences suffused him with a warm sort of feeling, and put some heart into him. "Ah! it's valuable, no doubt," he sighed.

"Well, it seems to me you'll very soon be by your iron pot at home. How the girls at home will cotton to you! You may pick and choose. No doubt your house is crazy enough just now.....well, I suppose we want a little money to build it up again, just a little, eh...?"

"That's true enough.....the house is in sore need—wood is so dear with us."

"Come now, how much? Old shanty wants repairing, eh? How about a horse? Got one?"

"A horse? Oh, yes, there is one.....but damned old."

"Well, you must have a horse, of course.....A jolly good'un.....And a cow, I suppose.....some sheep.....fowls of different sorts, eh?"

"Don't speak of it! Ah! if it could be so! Ah! Lord! Lord! then life would be something like."

"Well, friend, life's a poor thing in itself.....I know something about it myself. I have my own little nest somewhere or other. My father was one of the richest in the village....."

Chelkash rowed slowly. The skiff rocked upon the waves saucily splashing against her sides, scarcely moving upon the dark sea, and the sea sported ever more and more saucily. Two people were dreaming as they rocked upon the water, glancing pensively around them. Chelkash guided Gabriel's thoughts to his village, wishing to encourage him a little and soothe him. At first he spoke, smiling sceptically to himself all the time; but, presently, suggesting replies to his neighbour, and reminding him of the joys of a rustic life, as to which he himself had long been disillusioned, he forgot all about them, and remembered only the actual present, and wandered far away from his intention, so that instead of questioning the rustic about his village and its affairs, he insensibly fell to laying down the law to him on the subject.

"The chief thing in the life of the peasant, my friend, is liberty. You are your own master. You have your house—not worth a farthing, perhaps—but still it is your own. You have your land—a mere handful, no doubt—still it is yours. You have your own hives, your own eggs, your own apples.

You are king on your own land! And then the regularity of it. Work calls you up in the morning—in spring one sort of work, in summer another sort of work, in autumn and in winter work again, but again of a different sort. Wherever you go, it is to your house that you always return—to warmth and quiet. You're a king, you see. Ain't it so?" concluded Chelkash enthusiastically, thus totting up the long category of rustic rights and privileges with the accompanying suggestion of corresponding obligations.

Gabriel looked at him curiously, and also felt enthusiastic. During this conversation he had managed to forget whom he was having dealings with, and saw before him just such a peasant-farmer as himself, chained for ages to the soil through many generations, bound to it by the recollections of childhood, voluntarily separated from it and from its cares, and bearing the just punishment of this separation.

"Ah, brother! true! Ah, how true! Look at yourself now. What are you now without the land? Ah! the land, my friend, is like a mother; not for long do you forget her."

Chelkash fell a-musing. He began to feel once more that irritating, burning sensation in his breast, that sensation which arose whenever his pride—the pride of the tireless adventurer—was wounded by something, especially by something which had no value in his eyes.

"Silence!" he cried savagely, "no doubt you thought I meant all that seriously. Open your pouch a little wider."

"You're a funny sort of man," said Gabriel, suddenly grown timid again, "as if, I were speaking of you. I suppose there are lots like you. Alas! what

a lot of unhappy people there are in the world!..... vagabonds who.....”

“ Sit down, blockhead, and row,” commanded Chelkash curtly, bottling up within him, somehow or other, a whole stream of burning abuse gushing into his throat.

Again they changed places, and as they did so, Chelkash, as he crawled into the stern across the packages, felt a burning desire to give Gabriel a kick that would send him flying into the water, and at the same time could not muster up sufficient strength to look him in the face.

The short dialogue broke off; but now a breath of rusticity was wafted to Chelkash from the very silence of Gabriel. He began to think of the past, forgot to steer the boat, which was turned to and fro by the surge, and drifted seawards. The waves seemed to understand that this skiff had lost its purpose, and pitching her higher and higher, began lightly playing with her, flashing their friendly blue fire beneath her oars. And visions of the past rose quickly before Chelkash—visions of the long distant past, separated from his present purpose by a whole barrier of eleven years of a vagabond life. He succeeded in recalling himself as a child; he saw before him his village, his mother, a red-cheeked, plump woman, with good grey eyes, his father, a red-bearded giant with a stern face. He saw himself a husband, he saw his wife, black-haired Anfisa, with a long pig-tail, full-bodied, gentle, merry.....again he beheld himself, a handsome beau, a soldier in the Guards; again he saw his father, grey-headed and crooked by labour, and his mother all wrinkled and inclining earthwards; he conjured up, too, a picture of the meeting in the

village when he returned from service; he saw how proud of his Gregory his father was before the whole village his broad-shouldered, vigorous, handsome soldier-son.....Memory, that scourge of the unlucky, revived the very stories of the past, and even distilled a few drops of honey in the proffered draught of venom—and all this, too, simply to crush a man with the consciousness of his mistakes, and make him love this past and deprive him of hope in the future.

Chelkash felt himself fanned by the peaceful friendly breezes of his native air, conveying with them to his ear the friendly words of his mother and the solid speeches of his sturdy peasant-father, and many forgotten sounds, and the sappy smell of his mother-earth, now just thawed, now just ploughed up, and now covered by the emerald-green silk of the winter crops. And he felt himself cast aside, rejected, wretched, and lonely, plucked forth from and flung for ever away from that order of life in which the blood that flowed in his veins had worked its way upwards.

“Hie! whither are we going?” asked Gabriel suddenly.

Chelkash started, and looked around with the uneasy glance of a bird of prey.

“Ugh! The devil only knows! It doesn’t matter .....come, a steadier stroke! We shall be ashore immediately.”

“Meditating, eh?” inquired Gabriel with a smile.

Chelkash looked at him angrily. The youth had quite recovered himself; he was calm, merry, and in a way, even triumphant. He was very young, he had the whole of life still before him. And he knew nothing. That was stupid. Perhaps it was the land that kept him back. When such thoughts flashed

through the head of Chelkash, he became still surlier, and in reply to Gabriel's question he growled:

"I was tired.....and there was the rocking of the sea."

"Yes, it does rock.....But now, suppose we are nabbed with that?" he asked, and he touched the parcels with his foot.

"No fear.....be easy! I'm going to hand them over immediately and get the money. Come!

"Five hundred, eh?"

"Not much less, I should think."

"What a lot of money! If only it had come to a poor wretch like me! I'd have sung a pretty song with it."

"In clodhopper fashion, eh?"

"Nothing less. Why, I would **straight off**....."

And Gabriel was carried away on the wings of his imagination. Chelkash seemed depressed. His moustaches hung down, his right side, sprinkled by the waves, was wet, his eyes were sunken, and had lost their brilliance. He was very miserable and depressed. All that was predatory in his appearance seemed to have been steeped in a lowering melancholy, which even came to light in the folds of his dirty shirt.

"Tired, eh? and I'm so well...You've overdone it..."

"We shall be there in a moment...Look!...yonder!"

Chelkash turned the boat sharply round, and steered it in the direction of a black something emerging from the water.

The sky was once more all covered with clouds, and rain had begun to descend—a fine, warm rain pattering merrily down on the crests of the waves.

"Stop! slower!" commanded Chelkash.

The nose of the skiff bumped against the hull of a barque.

"Are the devils asleep," growled Chelkash, grasping with his boat-hook a rope dangling down the side of the ship... "Why, the ladder's not let down! And it's raining, too! Why don't they look sharp! Hie! sluggards! hie!"

"Is that Chelkash?" murmured a friendly voice above them.

"Yes, let down the ladder."

"How goes it, Chelkash?"

"Let down the ladder, you devil!" roared Chelkash.

"Oh, he's waxy to-day, eh? There you are, then."

"Up you go, Gabriel," said Chelkash, turning to his companion.

In a moment they were on the deck, where three dark-headed figures, jabbering vigorously together in a strange prickly sort of tongue, were looking overboard into Chelkash's skiff. The fourth, wrapped round in a long cloak, came to him and pressed his hand in silence, and then glanced suspiciously at Gabriel.

"Have the money ready by morning," said Chelkash curtly. "And now I'll have a little sleep. Come, Gabriel. Do you want anything to eat?"

"I should like to sleep," replied Gabriel, and in a few moments he was snoring in the dirty hold of the ship; but Chelkash, seated by his side, was fitting on some sort of boot to his foot, and meditatively spitting about him, fell to whistling angrily and moodily through his teeth. Then he stretched himself

alongside Gabriel, and without taking off his boots, his arms beneath his head, and began concentrating his attention on the deck, twisting his moustaches the while.

The barque rocked slowly on the heaving water, now and then a plank gave forth a melancholy squeak, the rain fell softly on the deck, and the waves washed the sides of the vessel. It was all very mournful, and sounded like the cradle-song of a mother having no hope of the happiness of her soul.

Chelkash, grinding his teeth, raised his head a little, looked around him...and having whispered something, lay down again...Stretching his legs wide, he resembled a large pair of shears.

### III

He awoke first, gazed anxiously around, immediately recovered his self-possession, and looked at the still sleeping Gabriel. He was sweetly snoring, and was smiling at something in his sleep with his childish, wholesome, sun-tanned face. Chelkash sighed, and climbed up the narrow rope ladder. Through the opening of the hold he caught sight of a leaden bit of sky. It was light, but grey and drear—autumnal in fact.

Chelkash returned in about a couple of hours. His face was cheerful, his moustaches were twirled neatly upwards, a good-natured, merry smile was on his lips. He was dressed in long strong boots, a short jacket, leather trousers, and walked with a jaunty air. His whole costume was the worse for wear, but strong, and fitted him well, making his figure broader, hiding his boniness, and giving him a military air.

"Hie! get up, blockhead!" bumping Gabriel with his foot.

The latter started up, and not recognising him for sleepiness, gazed upon him with dull and terrified eyes. Chelkash laughed.

"Why, who would have known you?" said Gabriel at last, with a broad grin; "you have become quite a swell."

"Oh, with us that soon happens. Well, still in a funk, eh? How many times did you think you were going to die last night, eh? Tell me, now."

"Nay, but judge fairly. In the first place, what sort of a job was I on? Why, I might have ruined my soul for ever!"

"Well, I should like it all over again. What do you say?"

"Over again? Nay, that's a little too...how shall I put it? Is it worth it? That's where it is."

"What, not for two rainbows?"

"Two hundred roubles you mean? Not if I know it. Why, I ought..."

"Stop. How about ruining your soul, eh?"

"Well, you see, I might...even if you didn't," smiled Gabriel; "instead of ruining yourself you'd be a made man for life no doubt."

Chelkash laughed merrily.

"All right, we must have our jokes I suppose. Let us go ashore. Come, look sharp!"

"I'm ready."

And again they were in the skiff, Chelkash at the helm, Gabriel with the oars. Above them the grey sky was covered by a uniform carpet of clouds, and the turbid green sea sported with their skiff, noisily tossing it up and down on the still tiny billow, and

sportively casting bright saline jets of water right into it. Far away along the prow of the skiff a yellow strip of sandy shore was visible, and far away behind the stern stretched the free, sportive sea, all broken up by the hurrying heads of waves adorned here and there with fringes of white sparkling foam. There, too, far away, many vessels were visible, rocking on the bosom of the sea; far away to the left was a whole forest of masts, and the white masses of the houses of the town. From thence a dull murmur flitted along the sea, thunderous, and at the same time blending with the splashing of the waves into a good and sonorous music...And over everything was cast a fine web of ashen vapour, separating the various objects from each other.

"Ah, we shall have a nice time of it this evening," and Chelkash jerked his head towards the sea.

"A storm, eh?" inquired Gabriel, ploughing hard among the waves with his oars. He was already wet from head to foot from the scud carried across the sea by the wind.

Chelkash grunted assent.

Gabriel looked at him searchingly.

"How much did they give you?" he asked at last perceiving that Chelkash was not inclined to begin the conversation.

"Look there," said Chelkash, extending towards Gabriel a small pouch which he had taken from his pocket.

Gabriel saw the rainbow-coloured little bits of paper,\* and everything he gazed upon assumed a bright rainbow tinge.

\* Bank-notes.

"You are a brick! And here have I been thinking all the time that you would rob me. How much?"

"Five hundred and forty. Smart, eh?"

"S-s-smart!" stammered Gabriel, his greedy eyes running over the five hundred and forty roubles before they disappeared into the pocket again. Oh, my! what a lot of money!"—and he sighed as if a whole weight was upon his breast.

"We'll have a drink together, clodhopper," cried Chelkash enthusiastically. "Ah, we'll have a good time. Don't think I want to do you, my friend, I'll give you your share. I'll give you forty, eh? Is that enough for you? If you like you shall have 'em at once.

"If it's all the same to you—no offence—I'll have 'em then."

Gabriel was all tremulous with expectation, and not only with expectation, but with another acute sucking feeling which suddenly arose in his breast.

"Ha, ha, ha! That's like you! What a tight-fisted devil you are! I'll take 'em now! Well, take 'em, my friend; take 'em, I implore you. I really don't know what I might do with such a lot of money. Relieve me of it! Do take it I beg.

Chelkash handed Gabriel some nice bank-notes. The latter seized them with a trembling hand, threw down the oars, and began concealing the cash somewhere in his bosom, greedily screwing up his eyes and noisily inhaling the air, as if he were drinking something burning hot. Chelkash, with a sarcastic smile, observed him, but Gabriel soon took up the oars again, and rowed on nervously and hurriedly, as if afraid of something, and with his eyes cast down. His shoulders and ears were all twitching.

" Ah, you're greedy! Isn't that good enough? What more do you want? Just like a rustic!" said Chelkash pensively.

" Ah, with money one can do something," cried Gabriel, suddenly exploding with passionate excitement. And graspingly, hurriedly, as if pursuing his own thoughts and catching his words on the wing, he talked of life in the country, with money and without money, honour, contentment, liberty, and hilarity.

Chelkash listened to him attentively with a serious face, and with eyes puckered with some idea or other. At times he smiled a complacent smile.

" We have arrived!" cried Chelkash, at last interrupting the discourse of Gabriel.

A wave caught the skiff and skilfully planted it on the strand.

" Well, my friend, here's the end of the job. We must drag the boat a little further in shore that it may not be washed away. And then you and I will say good-bye. It is eight versts from here to the town. What are you going to do?—back to town, eh?"

A sly, good-natured smile lit up the face of Chelkash, and he had all the appearance of a man meditating something very pleasant for himself and unexpected for Gabriel. Dipping his hand into his pocket he crinkled the bank-notes there.

" No...I—I'm not going! I—I..." Gabriel breathed heavily, as if struggling with something. Within him was raging a whole mob of desires, words, and feelings, mutually devouring each other and filling him as if with fire.

Chelkash looked at him doubtfully.

" Why are you twisting about like that?"

"It's because, because..." But the face of Gabriel was burning red at one moment and deadly grey at another, and he was glued to the spot, now desiring to fall upon Chelkash, and now torn by other desires, the fulfilment of which was difficult for him.

Chelkash did not know what to make of such a state of excitement in this rustic. He waited to see what would come of it.

Gabriel began to laugh in an odd sort of way, it was more of a howl than a laugh. His head was lowered, the expression of his face Chelkash did not see, but the ears of Gabriel, alternately reddish and palish, were painfully prominent.

"Come, what the devil's the matter," said Chelkash, waving his hand, "have you fallen in love with me all at once? What's up? You change colour like a wench. Sorry to part from me, eh? Eh, block-head? Say what's the matter with you, and I'll be off."

"Going, are you?" shrieked Gabriel shrilly.

The sandy and desolate shore trembled beneath his cry, and the yellow billows of sand, washed by the billows of the sea, seemed to undulate. Chelkash also trembled. Suddenly Gabriel bounded from his place, threw himself at the feet of Chelkash, embraced them with his arms, and turned towards him. Chelkash staggered, sat down heavily on the sand, gnashed his teeth, and cut the air sharply with his long arm, clenching his fist at the same time. But strike he could not, being stayed by the shamefaced supplicating whisper of Gabriel:

"Dear little pigeon...Give me...that money! Give it to me, for Christ's sake!...What is it to you? Why, it was gained in a single night...in a single night!...

It would take me years...Give it me...I'll pray for you if you will! Perpetually...in three churches...for the salvation of your soul! Look now, you'd scatter it to the...winds...I would put it into land. Oh, give it to me! What is it to you?...How can you prize it? A single night...and you're a rich man. Do a good act! You're all but done for...You haven't got your way to make. But I would...Oh! give them to me!"

Chelkash, alarmed, astonished, and offended, sat on the sand, leaning back, supporting himself on his arms; he sat there in silence and fixed a terrible gaze on the rustic who had buried his head in his knees, sobbing as he whispered his petition. He repulsed him at last, leaped to his feet and, thrusting his hands into his pockets, flung the rainbow bank-notes to Gabriel.

"There, you dog! Devour...!" he cried, trembling with excitement, bitter sorrow and loathing for this greedy slave. And he felt himself a hero for thus throwing away the money. Reckless daring shone in his eyes and lit up his whole face.

"I was going to give you more of my own accord. I was a bit down in the mouth yesterday, and bethought me of my own village. I thought to myself: let us give this rustic a helping hand. I was waiting to see what you would do. If you asked you were to get nothing. And you! Ugh! you miser! mean hound! To think that it is possible so to lower oneself for money! Fool! Greedy devils the lot of you! Not to recollect yourself! To sell yourself for a fiver! Ugh!"

"Dear little pigeon! Christ save you! Now I have got something...a thousand! Now I am rich!"

cried Gabriel in his enthusiasm, all tremulous as he hid his money away in his bosom. "Ah, you merciful one! Never will I forget it...Never!... And I'll make my wife and children pray for you." Chelkash listened to his joyous cries, looked at his radiant face deformed by the rapture of greed, and he felt that he, thief, vagabond, and outcast though he was, never could be so greedy, so mean, so forgetful of his own dignity. Never would he be such a one! And these thoughts and sensations, filling him with the consciousness of his large-mindedness and nonchalance, held him fast to Gabriel by the sandy sea-shore.

"You have made me happy!" shrieked Gabriel, and seizing the hand of Chelkash he pulled it towards his face.

Chelkash was silent, and fished his teeth like a wolf. Gabriel continued to pour forth his heart to him:

"Do you know what was in my mind?...We came here—I saw the money...Thinks I...I'll fetch him one...you I meant...with the oar—c-c-crack! The money's mine and he...that's you...goes into the sea... who would ever light upon him? And if they did find him they would never inquire how he was killed or who killed him...such a fellow as that! He's not the sort of man people make a fuss about!...He's no good at all in the world! Who would ever trouble about him? You see how..."

"Give up that money!" howled Chelkash, seizing Gabriel by the throat.

Gabriel tore himself away—the other hand of Chelkash twined round him like a serpent—there was the grating tear of a rent shirt, and Gabriel lay on

the sands with senseless goggling eyes, with sprawling feet and the tips of his outstretched fingers fumbling for air. Chelkash stiff, dry, and savage with grinding teeth, laughed a bitter spasmodic laugh, and his moustaches twitched nervously on his clear-cut angular face. Never in his whole life had he felt so angry.

"What, you're lucky, eh?" he inquired of Gabriel in the midst of his laughter, and turning his back upon him, went right away in the direction of the town. But he hadn't gone a couple of yards when Gabriel, with his back arched like a cat, rose on one knee, and taking a wide sweep with his arm, threw after him a large stone, crying spitefully: "Crack!"

Chelkash yelled, put both his hands to the back of his head, tottered forward, turned towards Gabriel, and fell prone in the sand. Gabriel's heart died away as he gazed at him. There he lay, and presently he moved his foot, tried and raised his head, and stretched himself, quivering like a bowstring. Then Gabriel set off running away in the direction of the misty shore, it was overhung by a shaggy black cloud, and was dark. The waves were roaring as they ran upon the sand, mingling with it and then running back again. The foam hissed, and the sea-scud was flying about in the air.

The rain began to fall. At first there were but rare drops, but soon it poured down in torrents, descending from the sky in long thin jets, weaving a whole net of water-threads—a net suddenly hiding away within it the steppes and the sea, and removing them to an immense distance. Gabriel vanished behind it. For a long time nothing was visible except the rain, and the long lean man lying on the sand by the sea. But behold! again from out of

the rain emerged the running Gabriel; he flew like a bird and, running towards Chelkash, fell down before him, and began to pull him about on the ground. His hands dipped into the warm red slime. He trembled and staggered back with a pale and stupid face.\*

"Brother! get up! do get up!" he whispered in the ear of Chelkash amidst the din of the sea.

Chelkash came to himself and shoved Gabriel away, hoarsely exclaiming: "Be off!"

"Brother, forgive!.....the devil tempted me!" whispered the tremulous Gabriel, kissing Chelkash's hand.

"Go! Be off!" growled the other.

"Take the sin from my soul, my brother! Forgive!"

"Slope! Go to the devil, I say!" cried Chelkash, and with an effort he sat up on the sand. His face was pale and angry, his eyes were dull and half-closed, as if he wanted to sleep. "What more do you want? You have done what you wanted to do .....So go! Be off!" and he tried to kick the utterly woe-begone Gabriel, but could not, and would again have rolled over had not Gabriel held him up by embracing his shoulders. The face of Chelkash was now on a level with the face of Gabriel; both were pale, pitiful, and odd-looking.

"Phew!" said Chelkash, and he spat full into the wide-open eyes of his workman.

The latter gently wiped it off with his sleeve.

"What would you do? Won't you answer a word? Forgive me, for Christ's sake!"

"Ugh, you horror! But you'll never understand," cried Chelkash contemptuously, dragging off

his shirt from under his short jacket and proceeding to wrap it round his head in silence, save for the occasional gnashing of his teeth. "You have taken the notes, I suppose?" he muttered through his teeth.

"No, I've not taken them, my friend!.....I don't want them.....they'd do me harm!"

Chelkash shoved his hand into the pocket of his jacket, drew out a bundle of money, put back again in his pocket a single rainbow note, and pitched all the rest at Gabriel.

"Take it and go!"

"I'll not take it, my brother.....I cannot! Forgive me!"

"Take it, I say!" roared Chelkash, rolling his eyes horribly.

"Forgive me.....and then I'll take it!" said Gabriel timidly, and fell on his knees before Chelkash on the grey sand, now saturated with rain.

"Take it, you monster!" said Chelkash confidently, and, with an effort, raising Gabriel's head by the hair, he flung the money in his face. "There, take it! You sha'n't work for me for nothing. Take it without fear! Don't be ashamed of nearly killing a man. Nobody will bother about such as I. They'll even thank you when they hear about it. Come, take it! Nobody knows about your deed, and it's worth a recompense. There you are!"

Gabriel perceived that Chelkash was laughing at him, and his heart grew lighter. He grasped the money tightly in his hand.

"But, brother, you forgive me, won't you?" he inquired tearfully.

"What for, my brother?" said Chelkash in the same tone, rising to his feet and tottering a little.

“What for? For nothing at all. To-day it’s your turn, to-morrow mine.”

“Alas, my brother, my brother!” sobbed the afflicted Gabriel, shaking his head.

Chelkash stood in front of him with a strange smile, and the rag round his head, now slightly tinged with red, bore some resemblance to a Turkish fez.

The rain was pouring down as if from a bucket. The sea raged with a muffled roar, and the waves now beat upon the shore with frantic rage.

For a time both men were silent.

“Well, good-bye!” said Chelkash coldly and sarcastically, and set off on his journey.

He staggered as he went, his feet tottered beneath him, and he held his head so oddly, just as if he were afraid of losing it.

“Forgive me, brother!” Gabriel besought him once more.

“Bosh!” coldly replied Chelkash, pursuing his way. On he staggered, supporting his head all the time in the palm of his left hand, while with his right he gently twirled his fierce moustache.

Gabriel continued to gaze after him till he disappeared in the rain, which was now pouring down more densely than ever from the clouds in fine endless jets, enveloping the steppe in an impenetrable mist of a steely hue.

Then Gabriel took off his wet cap, crossed himself, looked at the money fast squeezed in his palm, sighed deeply and freely, hid the notes in his bosom, and with a spacious confident stride marched off along the sea-shore in the direction opposite to that in which Chelkash had vanished.

The sea howled, and cast huge heavy waves on the strand, churning them up into foam and scud. The rain cut up sea and land furiously. Everything around was filled with howling, yelling, moaning. Neither sea nor sky was visible behind the rain.

Soon the rain and the wash of the waves had cleansed the red spot on the place where Chelkash had lain, had washed away all traces of Chelkash, and all traces of the young rustic from the sand of the sea-shore. And on the desolate strand nothing remained as a memorial of the pretty drama played there by two living souls.

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## Alice Meynell

### CLOUD \*

During a part of the year London does not see the clouds. Not to see the clear sky might seem her chief loss but that is shared by the rest of England, and is, besides, but a slight privation. Not to see the clear sky is, elsewhere, to see the cloud. But not so in London. You may go for a week or two at a time, even though you hold your head up as you walk, and even though you have windows that really open, and yet you shall see no cloud, or but a single edge, the fragment of a form.

Guillotine windows never wholly open, but are filled with a doubled glass towards the sky when you open them towards the street. They are, therefore, a sure sign that for all the years when no other windows were used in London, nobody there cared much for the sky, or even knew so much as whether there were a sky.

But the privation of cloud is indeed a graver loss than the world knows. Terrestrial scenery is much, but it is not all. Men go in search of it; but the celestial scenery journeys to them. It goes its way round the world. It has no nation, it costs no weariness, it knows no bonds. The terrestrial scenery—the tourist's—is a prisoner compared with this. The tourist's scenery moves indeed, but only

\* From *Cloud of Life and other Essays* by kind permission of the author and the publisher, Mr. John Lane, London.

like Wordsworth's maiden, with earth's diurnal course, it is made as fast as its own graves. And for its changes it depends upon the mobility of the skies. The mere green flushing of its own sap makes only the least of its varieties; for the greater it must wait upon the visits of the light. Spring and autumn are inconsiderable events in a landscape compared with the shadows of a cloud.

The cloud controls the light, and the mountains on earth appear or fade according to its passage; they were so simply, from head to foot, the luminous grey or the emphatic purple, as the cloud permits, that their own local colour and their own local season are lost and cease, effaced before the all-important mood of the cloud.

The sea has no mood except that of the sky and of its winds. It is the cloud that, holding the sun's rays in a sheaf as a giant holds a handful of spears, strikes the horizon, touches the extreme edge with a delicate revelation of light, or suddenly puts it out and makes the foreground shine.

Every one knows the manifest work of the cloud when it descends and partakes in the landscape obviously, lies half-way across the mountain slope, stoops to rain heavily upon the lake, and blots out part of the view by the rough method of standing in front of it. But its greatest things are done from its own place, aloft. Thence does it distribute the sun.

Thence does it look away between the hills and valleys more mysteries than a poet conceals, but, like him, not by interception. Thence it writes out and cancels all the tracery of Monte Rosa, or lets the pencils of the sun renew them. Thence, hiding nothing, and yet, making dark, it sheds deep colour

upon the forest land of Sussex, so that, seen from the hills, all the country is divided between grave blue and graver sunlight.

And all this is but its influence, its secondary work upon the world. Its own beauty is unaltered when it has no earthly beauty to improve. It is always great: above the street, above the suburbs, above the gas-works and the stucco, above the faces of painted white houses—the painted surfaces that have been devised as the only things able to vulgarise light, as they catch it and reflect it grotesquely from their importunate gloss. This is to be well seen on a sunny evening in Regent Street.

Even here the cloud is not so victorious as when it towers above some little landscape of rather paltry interest—a conventional river heavy with water, gardens with their little evergreens, walks, and shrubberies; and thick trees, impervious to the light, touched, as the novelists always have it, with “autumn tints.” High over these rises, in the enormous scale of the scenery of clouds, what no man expected—an heroic sky. Few of the things that were ever done upon earth are great enough to be done under such a heaven. It was surely designed for other days. It is for an epic world. Your eyes sweep a thousand miles of cloud. What are the distances of earth to these, and what are the distances of the clear and cloudless sky? The very horizons of the landscape are near, for the round world dips so soon; and the distances of the mere clear sky are unmeasured—you rest upon nothing until you come to a star, and the star itself is immeasurable.

But in the sky of “sunny Alps” of clouds the sight goes farther, with conscious flight, than it could

ever have journeyed otherwise. Man would not have known distance veritably without the clouds. There are mountains indeed, precipices and deeps, to which those of the earth are pigmy. Yet the sky-heights, being so far off, are not overpowering by disproportion, like some futile building fatuously made too big for the human measure. The cloud in its majestic place composes with a little Perugino tree. For you stand or stray in the futile building, while the cloud is no mansion for man, and out of reach of his limitations.

The cloud, moreover, controls the sun, not merely by keeping the custody of his rays, but by becoming the counsellor of his temper. The cloud veils an angry sun, or, more terribly, lets fly an angry ray, suddenly bright upon tree and tower, with iron-grey, storm for a background. Or when anger had but threatened, the cloud reveals him, gentle beyond hope. It makes peace, constantly, just before sunset.

It is in the confidence of the winds, and wears their colours. There is a heavenly game, on south-west wind days, when the clouds are bowled by a breeze from behind the evening. They are round and brilliant, and come leaping up from the horizon for hours. This is a frolic and haphazard sky.

All unlike this is the sky that has a centre, and stands composed about it. As the clouds marshalled the earthly mountains, so the clouds in turn are now ranged. The tops of all the celestial Andes aloft are swept at once by a single ray, warmed with a single colour. Promontory after league-long promontory of a stiller Mediterranean in the sky is called out of mist and grey by the same finger. The cloudland is

very great, but a sunbeam makes all its nations and continents sudden with light. .

All this is for the untravelled. All the winds bring him this scenery. It is only in London, for part of the autumn and part of the winter, that the unnatural smoke-fog comes between. And for many and many a day no London eye can see the horizon, or the first threat of the cloud like a man's hand. There never was a great painter who had no exquisite horizons, and if Corot and Crome were right, the Londoner loses a great thing.

He loses the coming of the cloud, and when it is high in air he loses its shape. A cloud-lover is not content to see a snowy and rosy head piling into the top of the heaven; he wants to see the base and the altitude. The perspective of a cloud is a great part of its design—whether it lies so that you can look along the immense horizontal distances of its floor, or whether it rears so upright a pillar that you look up its mountain steeps in the sky as you look at the rising heights of a mountain that stands, with you, on the earth.

The cloud has a name suggesting darkness; nevertheless, it is not merely the guardian of the sun's rays and their director. It is the sun's treasurer; it holds the light that the world has lost. We talk of sunshine and moonshine, but not of cloud-shine, which is yet one of the illuminations of our skies. A shining cloud is one of the most majestic of all secondary lights. If the reflecting moon is the bride, this is the friend of the bridegroom.

Needless to say, the cloud of a thunderous summer is the most beautiful of all. It has spaces of a gray for which there is no name,

and no other cloud looks over at a vanishing sun from such heights of blue air. The shower-cloud, too, with its ~~thin~~ edges, comes across the sky with so influential a flight that no ship going out to sea can be better worth watching. The dullest thing perhaps in the London streets is that people take their rain there without knowing anything of the cloud that drops it. It is merely rain, and means wetness. The shower-cloud there has limits of time, but no limits of form, and no history whatever. It has not come from the clear edge of the plain to the south, and will not shoulder anon the hill to the north. The rain, for this city, hardly comes or goes; it does but begin and stop. No one looks after it on the path of its retreat.

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## Sister Nivedita (Margaret E. Noble)

### THE INDIAN SAGAS \*

Unseen, but all pervasive, in the life of every community, is the great company of the ideals. No decalogue has half the influence over human conduct that is exercised by a single drama or a page of narrative. The theory of chivalry interests us, but the *Idylls of the King* help to mould our character.

The whole of history, in so far as it may be known, is the common possession of the race ; but, in addition to this, every language makes its own contribution of literary creations, and national custom determines the degree in which these shall become available to all classes of the community, thereby reacting upon the national type. Few have considered how much might be done to ennoble and dignify common life in England by a wider dispersion of the love for Shakespeare. As it is, the Bible being the only book that is used in this sense, the careers and opinions of a few Syrian shepherds are apt to be more potent among us than that great Brutus, Desdemona, Horatio and their kindred, who are the offspring of the genius of our countryman, and in some sense therefore the fruit of English civic life itself.

It is said that in Greece the poetry of Homer and Euripides is known amongst the poorer classes to this

\* From *The Web of Indian Life* by kind permission of the Publishers, Messrs. Longmans Green and Co., London and New York.

day; and certain it is that the Catholic Church has done a great and little-understood service, in bringing the lives of the saints of all countries to bear upon the development of each. Every man habitually measures himself against some model, therefore every addition to the range of available types is to be welcomed. A king feels himself to be one of a class of royal persons who must be not only authoritative but also picturesque in their behaviour. And, whether he likes it or not, by this standard he knows himself to stand or fall. His very rank forces his pattern upon him. Amongst those of smaller place and greater personal freedom, capacity more readily shows its own complexion. Some of us, were our commonplace faculties touched with divine fire, would find our destiny in the qualities of the ideal merchant and administrator. That peculiar form of integrity, dignity, and wisdom that belongs to such a function would prove to be ours, or attainable by us. But although this is probably the commonest logical issue in English national life at present, it does not follow that every Englishman is fitter to achieve it. Here and there, especially perhaps among the Celtic contingent, we find one born for the quite different goal of perfect knighthood. Loyalty to leader and comrade, sympathy for the oppressed, far-shining fearlessness and love of freedom, are traits characteristic of an age of chivalry; and persons who embody them represent such a period, it being neither more nor less admirable than that of merchant-prince and caravan-chief. The potentialities of one man lead towards sainthood, of another to poetry, of a third to science or mechanics. One gravitates into leadership, another as naturally becomes disciple. One enjoys knowledge, another ignorance.

Were all of us developed to our own utmost we may take it that every place in life would be filled, every part in the world-drama played, but by men and women of such ripe and determined personality that we could no more confuse one with the other than we could mistake the conduct of Helen of Troy for that of Elisabeth of Hungary, or hers for that of Faust's Gretchen.

We have to notice, moreover, that in European life only the born idealist is deeply influenced by any of the miscellaneous characters of history and literature. Religion alone amongst us can exercise this compelling power on a large scale. And this is related to the fact that only religion gives ideals themselves as motives. Circumstances have in many cases offered such a setting that a life has been forced into brilliance and distinction, but the self-born intention of the saints could never be wholly fulfilled. Iphigenia could hardly have refused her sacrifice. Joan of Arc, on the contrary, must always have felt that the sword of Michael might have been held still more stainless and with a greater courage. It is this fact that gives to the ideals of religion their supreme power of individuation. We must remember also that they differ from others in making a universal appeal. The girl who aimed at becoming Portia would be guilty of vanity: she whose model is the Blessed Virgin receives the respect of all. To imitate Socrates would be a miserable affection: to imitate the religious hero is regarded as a common duty.

It may seem impossible to dower the heroes and heroines of literature with this projective energy of the lives of saints; but in India, as to some extent in Iceland, the feat has been accomplished. For India

is also one of the saga lands. At every lull in her history we may hear the chanting of her bards, and the joy of her people in the story of their past. The long twilight of the North is no better adapted to the growth of such a literature than the deep and early night of the South. In verandahs and courtyards, with the women concealed behind screens at the back, it has been the Indian fashion for hundreds of years through the winter months to gather at dusk round the seat of the Wandering Teller, and listen hour after hour to his stirring theme. Surrounded by lights and flowers, gay carpets and burning incense, there is in his performance a mixture of reading, song, and story. It is something of opera, sermon, and literature all in one.

Ever since the commencement of our era the Hindu people have possessed in their present forms two great poems, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The first of these is their Wars of Troy, their Heimskringla, their Morte d'Arthur. That is to say, it is the book of the Deeds and the Wars of the Heroes. Thanks to the long-established culture of the race, and the prestige which all literature enjoys as "sacred," the Mahabharata is to this day the strongest influence in the shaping of the lives and ambitions of Hindu boys.

The battle which it describes took place, if at all very nearly fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. It lasted many days, and the field of combat was called Kurukshetra, being situated on that great plain near Delhi where critical moments in the history of India have been so often decided. For many a century after Kurukshetra the wandering bards all over India sang of the great battle; and when any new

theme claimed their creative powers, it had to be recounted as if originally told by one of the heroes to another at some particular moment in the course of the main narrative. In this way the heart's heart of the whole poem, the Bhagavat Gita (a title translated by some scholars as "Gospel of the Bhagavats") brings an interesting instance of double drama with it. The Gita consists in itself of a dialogue between a young Chieftain and Krishna, the Divine Personage who is acting as his charioteer, at the moment of the opening of the eighteen days' combat. But the device which enables the conversation to be given in detail is the picture of an old blind king, head of one of the rival houses, seated some miles away, and attended in his anxiety by a man of what is called yogic, or hyper-æsthetic, that is, psychic sense, who utters to him every word as it is spoken.

The exquisite story of Savitri, similarly, is told by a rishi, or great sage, to Yudisthira, at the close of day, during the banishment of the five Pandavas to the forest.

On this plan, more than half the country-side tales of Northern India could be woven into the Mahabharata when it was first thrown into form by some unknown hand, three or four centuries before Christ. It underwent its final recension not more than two or three hundred years later—a possible fifteen hundred years after the occurrence of the events which are its central theme. It is easy to see that this saga fulfils thus all the conditions of great epic poetry. The stories that it tells have been worked over by the imagination of singers and people for hundreds of years. They have become simple, direct, inevitable. They are spoken out of the inmost heart of a nation not yet

dreaming of self-consciousness. They are nothing if not absolutely sincere.

Comparing the Mahabharata with the Iliad and Odyssey, we find it less formed, less highly-wrought; more amorphous, but also more brilliant and intense. To quote a great writer on Indian thought:—"Outline is entirely lost in colour."

These characteristics do not hold good to the same extent of the second Indian epic, the Ramayana which has a close-worked motive running throughout. This poem—the tale of the Exile of Sita and Rama—received its present form not long after the Mahabharata, early in the Buddhist period. It is supposed that under Buddhist influence the monastic life had come to be so honoured that the flower of the nation were drawn to it, rather than to the mingled responsibilities and joys of the home. The romantic reaction in ideals which was inevitable gathered itself about the ancient theme of a princely couple of the house of Oudh, in whom all that was precious in monasticism was found blended with all that was desirable in sovereignty and love. The strong and quiet story spoke straight to the heart of the people, and to this day there are no characters so beloved by the masses as those of the Ramayana, no one force that goes so far towards the moulding of Indian womanhood, as the ever-living touch of the little hand of that Sita who is held to have been Queen of Ayodhya thousands of years ago.

The Ramayana, then, is a love-story which grew up and came to its flowering in the beginning of the Christian era. But it is unlike all other romances of that early epoch in the subtlety and distinctiveness of its various characters, and in the complexity of its

interpretation of life. For though humanity itself may differ little from age to age, we have been accustomed to look for a definite growth in its literary self-reflection. We expect primitive poetry to be pre-occupied with events, portraying men and women only in bold outline, as they move with simple grandeur through their fate. We do not look to it for subtle analysis of motive, or any exact mingling of the sweet and bitter cup of the personal life. The progress of literature up to this time has been largely, as we think, the intensifying recognition of human variation within a given psychological area. And in making such a statement we take pains to eliminate from the word "progress" all sense of improvement, since Homer remains for ever superior to Browning. Simply, we find in art a parallel to the physical process by which the race moves on from strong family and communal types to a universal individual divergence. An overwhelming appreciation of spiritual content is what we have been ready in Europe to call "the modern spirit." It is a question whether the name can stand, however, when the Indian Epics become better known; for, strangely enough, in spite of their age and the heroic nature of their matter, they are permeated with this very quality. In the Ramayana especially, as incident leads to incident, we have to realise that this is no story told for our amusement, but a woman's soul laid bare before us, as she climbs from steep to steep of renunciation.

Perhaps only those who are in touch with national aspiration can fully understand the roundness and plasticity of its drama, but even the most cursory reader must be struck with this insight and delicacy of the Ramayana.

It is more to-day than a completed work of art; it is still a means for the development of the popular imagination. Even amongst the written versions we find no two quite alike. All children are brought up on the story, yet those who can read the original Sanskrit are few in number. To meet this fact translations have been made into various vernaculars by great poets from time to time—into Bengali, for instance, by Kritibas, and into Hindi by Tulsidas. Special incidents again have been selected and worked up into great episodes in Sanskrit, by one and another, such as Bhavabhuti in his “Exile of Sita,” or Datta in the “Epic of Ravana.”

In these versions the story becomes more and more clearly defined. Pulsing through every Ramayana runs the Hindu reverence for Rama as man, husband, and king. This reverence may seek new modes of expression, but it can never admit that that which is expressed was at any time less than the ideal. Yet we must remember that that ideal is, in the ancient terms, Oriental rather than Occidental. It belonged to a conception of duty that placed Society far above the individual, and made the perfect king seek the good of his people without any consideration for his own or his wife's happiness. The fact that made his marriage perfect was its complete demonstration that it was as possible for two as for one to devote themselves first to the general weal. For the acquiescence of Sita is given in her twenty years of silent banishment. Once during that time, says one of the regional poets, she saw her husband as he passed through the forest where she was and kept silence still. And though the incident is an addition not found in the original, it only serves to bring out more clearly

the intention of the first poem, where every dumb moment of those twenty years speaks louder than words the wife's acquiescence in her husband's will.

Behind the vernacular translators stand all those old nurses and granddams on whose laps the poets themselves first heard the great tale; and it is their perfect freedom to give their own versions of each episode—as must any of us in recounting actual happenings—that keeps it fresh and living and explains its changes of tint in the hands of genius.

Without the recognition of this working of the communal consciousness on the theme, there can be no complete criticism of the Ramayana, for of this are all new transcribings of the story born. It is more or less in this fashion that the old tale is told :

Long ago, in the age of the heroes, there dwelt kings in Oudh, of whose race came one Rama, heir to the throne, great of heart, and goodly to look upon. And Rama was wedded to Sita, daughter of Janaka the king, fairest and purest of all the children of men. Now Rama had been trained in all knowledge and in the sports of princes, living, as was the manner of those days, in the forest, with his brother Lakshman, in the care of a great sage. And it happened, after he was come home again and wedded with Sita, that there arose a trouble between the king his father, and one of the younger queens, Kaikeyi, who desired that her son Bharata should inherit the throne, and pleaded that her husband had once promised her whatever gift she should desire. And when one told Rama of this contention that was embittering his father's age, he replied at once by a vow to renounce the throne and retire to the forest for fourteen years. And gladly, he said, was this vow made, since it would give pleasure

to Kaikeyi, his step-mother, and confer on Bharata, his younger brother, the kingdom and its wealth. And Sita, overhearing the vow, added hers to his, in spite of his entreaties that she should not quit her royal state. Lakshman also declared that he would not be separated from his elder brother. So all three fared forth together into the great forest. Thither, shortly after, followed Bharata, saying that the king their father was now dead of grief at the wrong done his eldest son, and imploring Rama to return and take his own place in his kingdom, for Bharata had mingled no whit in the scheming of Kaikeyi. But Rama refused till the days of his vow should be ended; after fourteen years, he said, he would return and reign. Then, very reluctantly, went Bharata back to Oudh, but he carried with him the sandals of Rama, declaring that these should hold the throne, and he himself sat always below them, governing in their name.

Left in the forest, the life of Sita, Rama, and Lakshman, became that of gentle anchorites, and they grew great in all manner of woodcraft, so that the wild creatures answered to their call. But Rama and Lakshman never ceased to remember their knighthood, holding themselves ready with sword and bow for the service of all who were in distress. It was on one of their expeditions of knight-errantry that they offended a great ogress, and brought on themselves the enmity of her powerful kinsman, Ravana the Ten-headed, king of the island of Lanka or Ceylon.

It was inevitable that some of the skalds, who chanted the deeds of Rama should attach themselves specially to the character of this mythical Ravana, elaborating all connected with him. Hence, just as Hector and Andromache are amongst the most

beautiful figures in the *Iliad*, so, in the Indian poem, is Mandodari, the wife of Ravana, one of the strongest personages, at least from a literary point of view. To this day old wives tell of an incident that has crept into no published poem. When the time came, they say, that Rama had conquered and slain his ten-headed foe, Mandodari was inconsolable that she was now a widow. Then it was declared to her that, till her husband's funeral fire was dead she should be no widow, and that that fire should burn for ever. And so, sure enough, we have only to shut our ears tight, and we hear the roaring of the flames that are burning Ravana to ashes!

For so it was, that Rama had to defeat and slay this evil king in order to recover Sita, who had been stolen from him. The story of the Taking of Sita is as beautiful as Pluto's Capture of Proserpine.

It is the close of day in the forest, and Sita is alone. Lakshman—one of the most “perfect gentle knights” in the whole range of fiction—has left her, at her earnest entreaty that he should go to seek for Rama, but he has first drawn three circles about her with the end of his bow, and warned her not to step outside. The sun is not yet set, however, when a Brahmin appears, ashen-clad, with matted locks, and begs for charity. Sita pleads that it is late and she is alone, imploring him to go. And this he promises to do if only first she will step outside and give him a little food. She is full of dim forebodings of evil, but pity at last gains the upper hand of fear; she steps out of her enchanted circles to bestow alms on him; he throws off the disguise of the Brahmin, appears as Ravana himself, and carries her off to his kingdom in his chariot. It is during the first terrible

moment of the journey that Sita drops her jewels stealthily behind her, in order that those coming after may be able to trace her flight.

Surely this picture of the exiled queen, standing amidst the long shadows in her simple hut, lost in the struggle between her desire to aid and all the invisible safeguards of her womanhood, is one that deserves the brush of some great painter.

For years Sita is kept confined in Lanka, and Rama and Lakshman, in their progress through what is depicted as the wilderness of Southern India, owe her discovery and much of their success in finally releasing her, to the services of their great ally, Hanuman, the monkey-general. It is supposed that if there be any historical foundation for the legend of the Ramayana, this name of Hanuman may refer to the chieftain of some strong aboriginal tribe. In any case, he stands to-day for all that is great in discipleship. Filled with the worship of Rama, he brings to his service the unquestioning obedience of a child and the genius of a man. It is in his presence and that of Lakshman that Sita goes proudly, at her own request, through that ordeal by fire which is to prove her stainlessness, and he declares that at death the names of Sita and Rama will be found written on his heart.

It is now time for the return to the kingdom, and Sita and Rama go back to Oudh, reigning there in perfect happiness close upon a year. Then comes the great crisis of their parting, in deference to the people's doubt of Sita. She retires to a distant forest, to live the life of a nun, under the care of Valmiki, the old hermit; and Rama sits alone on the throne of Oudh for the rest of his life. Once only does he speak of his loss. His subjects desire him to take a new queen, for

the performance of a state sacrifice that he cannot make alone. But here the wrath of the king blazes forth. No woman shall ever be put in Sita's place, but a golden image of her is made, and fills her part in the appointed ceremonies.

Shortly after her arrival in the forest, Sita had become the mother of twin sons, and Valmiki, their foster-father, brings these up as princes, only taking care to add to their education the knowledge of his own great poem, the Ramayana. He allows it to be supposed, also, that their mother is dead. When the boys are some twenty years of age, news goes about the country of a great religious festival to be held at the Court of Ayodhya, and the hermit makes ready to go up to it, taking his two foster-sons in the character of minstrels, and the queen.

The rest of the story is inevitable. The eyes of Rama discover his boys as they recite before him the deeds of his own past, and calling Valmiki to him, he speaks with hopeless longing the name of Sita. The old man draws her forward, and she unveils her face to her husband. At this moment, as the two look each upon the face that has been present to every thought for twenty years, the murmur of the people's doubt is once more heard, and the cry rises from the crowd, "Let her be tried by fire!"

No woman's pride could brook this renewed insult. Sita, the proud, the silent, the stainless, cries out for death. At her words, the ground opens, a chariot appears, and in the arms of her Mother Earth she is withdrawn from the world of men. Rama waits only to bestow the kingdom on his sons, and then plunges into the forest, to be for ever lost to humanity.

The story of the Mahabharata would be less easy to recount. Mighty warriors, beautiful women, and great saints move to and fro across its scenes in a glittering melee. The local colour is rich to a fault. The poem abounds in descriptions of social customs, domestic comfort, the fashions of old armour and similar details. But it is in the conception of character which it reveals that it becomes most significant. Bhishma, the Indian Arthur, is there, with his perfect knighthood and awful purity of soul. Lancelot is there—a glorified Lancelot, whose only fall was the utterance of a half-truth once, with purpose to mislead—in the person of the young king, Yudhishthira. And Krishna, the Indian Christ, is there, in that guise of prince and leader of men that has given him the name in India of “The Perfect Incarnation.” One of the rival houses consists of a family of no less than a hundred children so that the multiplicity of persons and incidents is best left to the imagination. Yet certain main features belong to the treatment of all characters alike. For the attention of the poet-chronicler is fixed on the invisible shackles of selfhood that bind us all. He seems to be describing great events; in reality he does not for one instant forget that he is occupied with the history of souls, depicting the incidence of their experience and knowledge on the external world.

One story is typical. The young princes are taking a lesson in shooting, and a clay bird has been set up as target. One by one they are asked by their master what they see. They reply, “A bird.” “A branch supporting a bird,” and so on. Till at last he puts the question to Arjuna, one of the youngest, and receives the answer, “A bird’s head and in that head

only the eye." The moment of the telling of this story to an Indian child is tense with feeling. For it embodies the culminating ideal of the nation, inasmuch as "Concentration of Mind" stands among Hindus for the supreme expression of that greatness which we may recognise in honour or courage or any kind of heroism.

The central character of the Mahabharata fulfils a very subtle demand. Bhishma is intended for the type of king and knight. Now, knighthood implies the striking of many blows, and kingship the protecting of manifold and diverse interests, but perfection requires that nothing shall be done from the motive of self-interest. In order, therefore, that he may display all the greatness of character that is possible to man in these relations, Bhishma is made, as heir to the throne, to renounce all rights of succession and even of marriage, at the beginning of his life, by way of setting his father free to marry a fisher-girl whom he loves, and make her son his heir.

From this point, having set aside the privileges of parent and sovereign, Bhishma is made to bear to the full the responsibilities of both; and finally, in the energy and faithfulness of his military service, life itself can only be taken from him when he with his own lips has given instructions for his defeat. In Bhishma, therefore, we have the creation of a people who have already learnt to regard detachment as a necessary element of moral grandeur.

It is strange to us, but perfectly consistent with this point of view, that as long as Bhishma remains a militant figure in the battle of Kurukshetra he is acting as *generalissimo* for what he regards as the worse cause of the two. He has done his best to prevent the war,

but when it is determined on, he sets himself to obey his sovereign, in the place that is his own. He is filled, as the Indian poet represents him, with supernatural assurance that his side must lose, yet he strikes not a single blow either more or less for this consideration. In like manner it is told of Krishna that after he has done his utmost for peace in the interests of justice, he is approached by both parties for his aid, and that such is the calmness of his outlook on life that he submits the matter to a moral test. To one claimant he will give his armies; the other he will serve in person unarmed, he says, leaving the choice to themselves. It is clear that the man whose greed and ambition are plunging whole nations into war will not have the spiritual insight to choose the Divine Person for his champion, rather than great hosts. And he does not.

Such stories illustrate the Hindu endeavour to understand every man's relation to a given situation, and to read in conflicting lines of conduct that same irresistible necessity which, acting from within, hurls each one of us upon his fate. In this endeavour lies the real secret of that tolerance which has so puzzled observers in the Indian people. Not only has there never been religious persecution among Hindus, but the sceptic, the atheist, or the Christian missionary is as free to preach on the steps of the temple as the believing priest. The European correlative of the trait is found in the dramatist or novelist of genius who can represent the motives of opposing sides so as to draw equally upon our sympathy; but this has always been an exceptional ability with us, and not a common attitude of mind. In the Mahabharata itself the most perfect expression of such reconciliation of opposites is

perhaps found in the story of Shishupal, the enemy of Krishna. Shishupal's mother had won Krishna's promise that her son might sin against him a hundred times, and yet be forgiven. But this cup of error was already full, when his crowning blasphemy occurred. The occasion was that of the offering of certain honours to the Chief of Knights. Krishna, in right of his divinity, had already been named, and the decision that to him should the sacrifice be made was spoken. To the deep-rooted hostility of Shishupal, however, this was unendurable. He broke out into indignant protest. In what sense, he asked, was Krishna greatest of the knights? Was not Bhishma present? Was not Yudhisthira their liege? Let the honours be paid to one of these.

Shocked and outraged, every one looked to Bhishma to punish the impiety; but that aged clansman's face was turned towards the Avatar. Then, as all waited in suspense, from behind the Blessed Knight flashed forth the bright discus of Vishnu, and striking the helmet of Shishupal clove him through, even to the ground. And lo, before their eyes, the soul of that sinful one came forth like a mass of flame, and passed over and melted into the feet of Krishna. "For even the enemies of God go to salvation," says the old chronicler, "by thinking much upon him." A later increment of explanation makes the point still clearer. It had happened in some previous age that a great and enlightened spirit had fallen under a curse—had strayed, that is to say, into those circles of destiny that would involve him in human birth. And the All Merciful, being touched with pity, offered him the path of return through seven births as the friend of God, or three as His enemy. The second alternative

was his instant choice, and he became in one life Ravana the foe of Rama; in another, a certain persecuting king; and in the third, this Shishupal, now once more absorbed into Eternal Bliss.

Few characters in literature can rank with the heroic figure of young Karna. Dark with anger, but perfect in chivalry, he resents to the death a slight levelled at his birth, yet turns in the midst of princely acclaims to salute reverently the aged charioteer supposed to be his father. Full of a palpitating humanity is Draupadi, the Pandava Queen. Beautiful and high-spirited as she is, she has all a woman's inability to keep a secret, and her foolish boastfulness almost betrays the heroes before their time is ripe. The strongest attraction of such figures is always the actuality. There is nothing incredibly exalted about them, but good and evil are entwined in their natures, strong and heroic though they be, as in us all.

The end of Bhishma is like that of some ancient Norseman. Lying on the field of battle where he fell, he refuses to be moved, and asks only for a bed and pillow such as are fit for knightly bowmen. One of the young chiefs divines his meaning, and, stepping forward, shoots arrows into the earth till what was desired has been provided. And on his bed of arrows Bhishma dies.

Such are some of the characters who form the ideal world of the Hindu home. Absorbed in her "worship of the Feet of the Lord," the little girl sits for hours in her corner, praying, "Make me a wife like Sita! Give me a husband like Rama!" Each act or speech of the untrained boy rushing in from school, may remind some one, half-laughing, half-admiring, of Yudisthira or Lakshman, of Karna or

Arjuna, and the name is sure to be recalled. It is expected that each member of the family shall have his favourite hero, who will be to him a sort of patron saint, and may appear at the centre of the story, if he is bidden to recount it. Thus, when one tells the Ramayana, Ravana is the hero; another makes it Hanuman; only the books keep it always Sita and Rama. And it is well understood that the chosen ideal exercises a preponderant influence over one's own development. None could love Lakshman without growing more full of gentle courtesy and tender consideration for the needs of others; he who cares for Hanuman cannot fail to become more capable of supreme devotion and ready service. And justice itself must reign in the heart that adores Yudisthira.

The character of Bhishma in the Mahabharata as that of Sita in the Ramayana is a proof that Indian philosophy was completed before the Epics. But that philosophy itself, we must remember, was directly related to the common life of common folk. Only this fact can explain the recognition and welcome of such conceptions by the whole nation. Let us look at the love story of Sita. Her feeling is consecrated by the long years of poverty filled with worship, in the forest. When it is thus established, she undergoes the dreary persecution and imprisonment at the hands of Ravana. Every moment finds her repeating the name of Rama, her faith unshaken in her ultimate rescue. At the end she herself suggests the fiery ordeal, and goes through it with dauntless courage.

Then for one short year, as wife, and queen, and future mother, she tastes of entire earthly happiness, only to be swept away from her home again in the sternness of her husband's will for his people's good.

Through twenty years of acquiescent silence she keeps now, in all its fulness, that love that sent her first to share Rama's exile in the forest, and yet the perfection of her pride of womanhood is shown when she dies of the insult conveyed in a spoken doubt.

We believe vaguely that the power to renounce distinguishes the human from all like known to us; but a conception of renunciation so searching, so austere as this appals us. It is clear that a commanding philosophy of self-discipline lay behind, or the poet's hand could not have been so remorseless; but it is also clear that that philosophy was living in the heart and effort of the people, or Sita and Rama could not have been so loved.

We ask in vain what can have been the life of India before she found refuge and direction in such dreams as these. For to-day it has become so one with them that all trace of the dawn before they were is lost. They penetrate to every part of the country, every class of society, every grade of education. Journeying in the mountains at nightfall, one came upon the small open hut of the grain-dealer, and saw, round a tiny lamp, a boy reading the Ramayana in the vernacular to a circle of his elders. At the end of each stanza they bowed their heads to the earth, with the chant, "To dear Sita's bridegroom, great Rama, all hail!" The shopkeeper in the city counts out his wares to the customer, saying "One (Ram), two (Ram), three (Ram)," and so on, relapsing into a dream of worship when the measuring is done. Nay, once at least it is told how at the "Four (Ram)" the blessed name was enough to touch the inmost soul of him who uttered it, and he rose up then and there and left the world behind him. The woman terrified at

thunder calls on "Sita Ram!" and the bearers of the dead keep time to the cry of "Rama Nama Sattya hail!" ("The name of the Lord alone is real!")

What philosophy by itself could never have done for the humble, what the laws of Manu have done only in some small measure for the few, that the *epics* have done through unnumbered ages and are doing still for all classes alike. They are the perpetual Hinduisers, for they are the ideal embodiments of that form of life, that conception of conduct, of which laws and theories can give but the briefest abstract, yet towards which the hope and effort of every Hindu child must be directed.

We are in the habit of talking of the changeless East; and, though there is a certain truth in the phrase, there is also a large element of fallacy. One of the most striking features of Hindu society during the past fifty years has been the readiness of the people to adopt a foreign form of culture and to compete with those who are native to that culture on equal terms. In medicine, in letters, in science, even in industry, where there has been opportunity, we are astonished at the intellectual adaptability of the race. Is the mere beckoning of the finger of the nineteenth century enough to subvert predilections as old as Babylon and Nineveh? we ask, amazed. By no means. Such changes as these are merely surface deep. The *hauteur* of the East lies in the very knowledge that its civilisation has nothing to fear from the social and intellectual experiments of its youngsters, or even from such complete changes of mental raiment as amongst newer peoples would constitute revolutions of thought, for the effort of Eastern civilisation has always been to the solitary end of moralising the

individual, and in this way it differs essentially from Western systems of culture, which have striven rather for the most efficient use of materials. If Alexander, capable of organising the largest number of his fellows most effectually for a combination of military, commercial, and scientific ends in that most difficult form, an armed expedition over hostile territory—if Alexander be taken as the type of Occidental genius, then, as the culminating example of the Oriental we must name Buddha; for clear and intense conceptions of perfect renunciation and inner illumination are the hidden springs of Hindu living, around which the home itself is built. These it is of which the Epics are the popular vehicles, these it is which give its persistence to Indian civilisation through the centuries, and this is why no examination syllabus, no alien's kindly inspiration, no foreigner's appreciation or contempt, can ever hope to have one iota of permanent influence on the national education at its core.

Reforming sects are very apt to reject what is much cultivated amongst the orthodox—the folk-lore that has grown up round the Epics in the Puranas and other literature. But to the poems themselves all cling fast. None fail to realise that they bear the mark of supreme literature, and so they remain a constant element, capable, like all great interpretations of life, of infinitely varied application, a treasure greater, because more greatly used, than any Anger of Achilles, or Descent into Purgatory, amongst them all.

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## Arthur Ruhl

### THE FALL OF ANTWERP \*

The storm which was to burst over Antwerp the following night was gathering fast when we arrived on Tuesday morning. Army motor trucks loaded with dismantled aeroplanes and the less essential impedimenta screamed through the streets bound away from, not toward, the front. The Queen, that afternoon, was seen in the Hotel St. Antoine receiving the good-byes of various friends. Consuls suddenly locked their doors and fled. And the cannon, rumbling along the eastern horizon as they had rumbled, nearer and nearer, for a fortnight, were now beyond the outer line of forts and within striking distance of the town.

That night, an hour or two after midnight, in my hotel by the water front, I awoke to the steady clatter of hoofs on cobblestones and the rumble of wheels. I went to the window, on the narrow side street, black as all streets had been in Antwerp since the night that the Zeppelin threw its first bombs, and looked out. It was a moonlight night, clear and cold, and there along the Quai St. Michael, at the end of the street, was an army in retreat. They were Belgians, battered and worn out with their unbroken weeks of hopeless fighting; cavalymen on their tired horses, artillerymen, head sunk on their chests, drowsing on

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their lurching caissons; the patient little foot soldiers, rifles slung across their shoulders, scuffling along in their heavy overcoats.

In the dark shadow of the tall old houses a few people came out and stood there watching silently and, as one felt, in a sort of despair. All night long men were marching by—and in London they were still reading that it was but a “demonstration” the Germans were engaged in—down the quay and across the pontoon bridge—the only way over the Scheldt—over to the Tete de Flandre and the road to Ghent. They were strung along the street next morning, boots mud-covered, mud-stained, intrenching shovels hanging to their belts, faces unshaven for weeks, just as they had come from the trenches; yet still patient and cheerful, with that unshakable Flemish good cheer. Perhaps, after all, it was not a retreat; they might be swinging round to the south and St. Nicholas to attack the German flank.....

But before they had crossed, another army, a civilian army, flowed down on and over the quay. For a week people had been leaving Antwerp; now the general flight began. From villages to the east and south-east, from the city itself, people came pouring down. In waggons drawn by huge Belgian draft horses, in carts pulled by the captivating Belgian work dogs, panting mightily and digging their paws into the slippery cobbles; on foot, leading little children and carrying babies and dolls and canaries and great bundles of clothes and household things wrapped in sheets, they surged toward that one narrow bridge and the crowded ferryboats. I saw one old woman, gray-haired and tanned like an Indian squaw with work in the fields, yet with a

fine, well-made face, pushing a groaning wheelbarrow. A strap went from the handles over her shoulders, and, stopping now and then to ask the news, she would slip off this harness, gossip for a time, then push on again. That afternoon under my window there was a tall waggon, a sort of hay waggon, in which there were twenty-two little tow-headed children, none more than eight or ten, and several almost babies in arms. By the side of the waggon a man, evidently father of some of them, stood buttering the end of a huge round loaf of bread and cutting off slice after slice, which the older children broke and distributed to the little ones. Two cows were tied to the back of the waggon and the man's wife squatted there milking them. All along the quay and in the streets leading into it were people like this—harmless, helpless, hard-working people, going they knew not where. The entrance to the bridge was soon choked. One went away and returned an hour later and found the same people waiting almost in the same spot, and, with that wonderful calm and patience of theirs, feeding their children or giving a little of their precious hay to the horses, quietly waiting their turn while the cannon which had driven them from their homes kept on thundering behind them.

That afternoon I walked uptown through the shuttered, silent streets—silent but for that incessant rumbling in the south-east and the occasional honking flight of some military automobile—to two of the hospitals. In one, a British hospital on the Boulevard Léopold, the doctor in charge was absent for the moment, and there was no one to answer my offer of occasional help if an outsider could be of use. As I

sat waiting a tall, brisk Englishwoman, in nurse's uniform, came up and asked what I wanted. I told her.

"Oh," she said, and in her crisp English voice, without further ado, "will you help me with a leg?"

She led the way into her ward, and there we contrived between us to bandage and slip a board and pillow under a fractured thigh. Between whispers of "*Courage! Courage!*" to the Belgian soldier, she said that she was the wife of a British general and had two sons in the army and a third—"Poor boy!" she murmured, more to him than to me—on one of the ships in the North Sea. I arranged to come back next morning to help with the lifting, and went on to another hospital in the Rue Nerviens, to find that little English lady who crossed with us in the Ostend boat in August on the way to her sister's hospital in Antwerp.

Here in the quiet wards she had been working while the Germans swept down on Paris and were rolled back again, and while the little nation which she and her sister loved so well was being clubbed to its knees. Louvain, Liege, Malines, Namur—chapters in all the long, pitiless story were lying there in the narrow iron beds. There were men with faces chewed by shrapnel, men burned in the explosion of the powder magazine at Fort Waelhem, when the attack on Antwerp began—dragged out from the underground passage in which the garrisons had sought momentary refuge and where most of them were killed, burned, and blackened. One strong, good-looking young fellow, able to eat and live apparently, was shot through the temples and blind in both eyes. It was the hour for carrying

those well enough to stand it out into the court and giving them their afternoon's airing and smoke. One had lost an arm, another, a whimsical young Belgian, had only the stump of a left leg. When we started to lift him back into his bed, he said he had a better way than that. So he put his arms round my neck and showed me how to take him by the back and the well leg. v

"*Bon!*" he said, and again! "*Bon*" when I let him down, and then reaching out and patting me on the back, "*Bon*"! he smiled again.

That night, behind drawn curtains which admitted no light to the street, we dined peacefully and well, and, except for this unwonted seclusion, just outside which were the black streets and still the endless procession of carts and waggons and shivering people, one might have forgotten, in that cheerfully lighted room, that we were not in times of peace. We even loitered over a grate fire before going to bed and talked in drowsy and almost indifferent fashion of whether it was absolutely sure that the Germans were trying to take the town.

It was almost exactly midnight that I found myself listening, half awake, to the familiar sound of distant cannon. One had come to think of it, almost, as nothing but a sound; and to listen with a detached and not unpleasant interest as a man tucked comfortably in bed follows a roll of thunder to its end or listens to the fall of rain.

It struck me suddenly that there was something new about this sound; I sat up in bed to listen, and that instant a far-off, sullen "*Boom!*" was followed by a crash as if lightning had struck a house a little way down the street. As I hurried to the window

there came another far-off detonation, a curious wailing whistle swept across the sky, and over behind the roofs to the left there was another crash.

One after another they came, at intervals of half a minute, or screaming on each other's heels as if racing to their goal. And then the crash or, if farther away, muffled explosion as another roof toppled in, or cornice dropped off, as a house made of canvas drops to pieces in a play.

The effect of those unearthly wails, suddenly singing in across country in the dead of night from six—eight—ten miles away—Heaven knows where—was, as the Germans intended it to be, tremendous. It is not easy to describe nor to be imagined by those who had not lived in that threatened city—the last Belgian stronghold—and felt that vast, unseen power rolling nearer and nearer. And now, all at once, it was here, materialised, demoniacal, a flying death, swooping across the dark into your very room.

It was like one of those dreams in which you cannot stir from your tracks, and meanwhile “Boom! .....Tzee-ee-ee-ee!”—is this one meant for you?

Already there was a patter of feet in the dark, and people with white bundles on their backs went stumbling by toward the river and the bridge. Motors came honking down from the inner streets, and the quay, which had begun to clear by this time, was again jammed. I threw on some clothes, hurried to the street. A rank smell of kerosene hung in the air; presently a petrol shell burst to the southward, lighting up the sky for an instant like the flare from a blast furnace, and a few moments later there showed over the roofs the flames of the first fire.

Although we could hear the wail of shells flying

across their wide parabola both into the town and out from the first ring of forts, few burst in our part of the city that night, and we walked up as far as the cathedral without seeing anything but black and silent streets. Every one in the hotel was up and dressed by this time. Some were for leaving at once; one family, piloted by the comfortable Belgian servants—far cooler than anyone else—went to the cellar, some gathered about the grate in the writing room to watch the night out; the rest of us went back to bed.

There wasn't much sleep for anyone that night. The bombardment kept on until morning, lulled slightly as if the enemy might be taking breakfast, then it continued into the next day. And now the city—a busy city of near four hundred thousand people—emptied itself in earnest. Citizens and soldiers, field guns, motor trucks, wheelbarrows, dogcarts, hayricks, baby carriages, droves of people on foot, all flowed down to the Scheldt, the ferries, and the bridge. They poured into coal barges, filling the yawning black holes as Africans used to fill slave ships, into launches and tugs, and along the roads leading down the river and south-westward toward Ostend.

One thought with a shudder of what would happen if the Germans dropped a few of their high explosive shells into that helpless mob, and it is only fair to remember that they did not, although retreating Belgian soldiers were a part of it, and one of the German aeroplanes, a mere speck against the blue, was looking calmly down overhead. Nor did they touch the cathedral, and their agreement not to shell any of the buildings previously pointed out on a map delivered to them through the American Legation seemed to be observed.

1 Down through that mass of fugitives pushed a London motor-bus ambulance with several wounded British soldiers, one of them sitting upright, supporting with his right hand a left arm, the biceps, bound in a blood-soaked tourniquet, half torn away. They had come in from the trenches, where their comrades were now waiting, with their helpless little rifles, for an enemy miles away, who lay back at his ease and swept them with shrapnel. I asked them how things were going, and they said not very well. They could only wait until the German aeroplanes had given the range and the trenches became too hot, then fall back, dig themselves in, and play the same game over again. ~

Following them was a hospital-service motor car, driven by a Belgian soldier, and in charge of a clean-cut, soldierlike-appearing young British officer. It was his present duty to motor from trench to trench across the zone of fire, with the London bus trailing behind, and pick up wounded. It wasn't a particularly pleasant job, he said, jerking his head toward the distant firing, and frankly he wasn't keen about it. We talked for some time, everyone talked to everyone else in Antwerp that morning, and when he started out again I asked him to give me a lift to the edge of town. L

Quickly we raced through the Place de Meir and the deserted streets of the politer part of Antwerp, where, the night before, most of the shells had fallen. We went crackling over broken glass, past gaping cornices and holes in the pavement, five feet across and three feet deep, and once passed a house quietly burning away with none to so much as watch the fire. The city wall, along which are the first line of forts, drew near, then the tunnel passing under it, and

we went through without pausing and on down the road to Malines. We were beyond the town now, bowling rapidly out into the flat Belgian country, and clinging there to the running board, with the October wind blowing quite through a thin flannel suit, it suddenly came over me that things had moved very fast in the last five minutes, and then all at once, in some unexpected fashion, all that elaborate barrier of *laissez-passeurs sauf-conduits*, and so on, had been swept aside, and, quite as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world, I was spinning out to that almost mythical "front."

Front, indeed! It was two fronts. There was an explosion just behind us, a hideous noise overhead, as if the whole zenith had somehow been ripped across like a tightly stretched piece of silk, and a shell from the Belgian fort under which we had just passed went hurtling down long aisles of air—further—further—to end in a faint detonation miles away.

Out of sight in front of us, there was an answering thud, and—"Tzee-ee-ee-er-r-r-BONG!"—a German shell had gone over us and burst behind the Belgian fort. Under this gigantic antiphony the motor car raced along, curiously small and irrelevant on that empty country road.

We passed great holes freshly made—craters five or six feet across and three feet deep, neatly blown out of the macadam—then a dead horse. There were plenty of dead horses along the roads in France, but they had been so for days. This one's blood was not yet dry, and the shell that had torn the great rip in its chest must have struck here this morning.

We turned into the avenue of trees leading up to an empty château, a field hospital until a few hours

before. Mattresses and bandages littered the deserted room, and an electric chandelier was still burning. The young officer pointed to some trenches in the garden. "I had those dug to put the wounded in in case we had to hold the place," he said. "It was getting pretty hot."

There was nothing here now, however, and, followed by the London bus with its obedient enlisted men doing duty as ambulance orderlies, we motored a mile or so further on to the nearest trench. It was in an orchard beside a brick farmhouse, with a vista in front of barbed-wire entanglement and a carefully cleaned firing field stretching out to a village and trees about half a mile away. They had looked very interesting and difficult, those barbed-wire mazes and suburbs ruthlessly swept of trees and houses, when I had seen the Belgians preparing for the siege six weeks before, and they were to be of about as much practical use now as pictures on a wall.

There are, it will be recalled, three lines of forts about Antwerp—the inner one, corresponding to the city's wall; a middle one a few miles further out, where the British now were, and the outer line, which the enemy had already passed. Their artillery was hidden far over behind the horizon trees, and the British marines and naval reserve men who manned these trenches could only wait there, rifle in hand, for an enemy that would not come, while a captive balloon a mile or two away to the eastward and an aeroplane sailing far overhead gave the ranges, and they waited for the shrapnel to burst. The trenches were narrow and shoulder deep, very like trenches for gas or water pipes, and reasonably safe except when a shell burst directly overhead. One had struck

that morning just on the inner rim of the trench, blown out one of those craterlike holes, and discharged all its shrapnel backward across the trench and into one of the heavy timbers supporting a bombproof roof. A raincoat hanging to a nail in this timber was literally shot to shreds. "That's where I was standing," said the young lieutenant in command, pointing with a dry smile to a spot not more than a yard away from where the shell had burst.

Half a dozen young fellows, crouched there in the bombproof, looked out at us and grinned. They were brand-new soldiers, some of them, boys from the London streets who had answered the thrilling posters and signs, "Your King and Country Need You," and been sent on this ill-fated expedition for their first sight of war. The London papers are talking about it as I am writing this—how this handful of nine thousand men, part of them recruits who scarcely knew one end of a rifle from another, were flung across the Channel on Sunday night and rushed up to the front to be shot at and rushed back again. I did not know this then, but wondered if this was what they had dreamed of—squatting helplessly in a ditch until another order came to retire—when they swung through the London streets singing "It's a long, long way to Tipperary" two months ago.

Yet not one of the youngest and the greenest showed the least nervousness as they waited there in that melancholy little orchard under the incessant scream of shells. That unshakable British coolness, part sheer pluck, part a sort of lack of imagination, perhaps, or at least of "nerves," left them as calm and casual as if they were but drilling on the turf of Hyde Park. And with it persisted that almost

equally unshakable sense of class, that touching confidence in one's superiors—the young clerk's or mechanic's inborn conviction that whatever that smart, clean-cut, imperturbable young officer does and says must inevitably be right—at least that if he is cool and serene you must, if the skies fall, be cool and serene too.

We met one young fellow as we walked through an empty lateral leading to a bombproof prepared for wounded, and the ambulance officer asked him sharply how things had been going that morning.

“Oh, very well, sir,” he said with the most respectful good humour, though a shell bursting just then a stone's throw beyond the orchard made both of us duck our heads. “A bit hot, sir, about nine o'clock, but only one man hurt. They do seem to know just where we are, sir; but wait till their infantry comes up—we'll clean them out right enough, sir.”

And if he had been ordered to stay there and hold the trench alone, one could imagine him saying in that same tone of deference and good humour: “Yes, sir; thank you, sir,” and staying, too, till the cows came home.

We motored down the line to another trench—this one along a road with fields in front and about a couple of hundred yards behind a clump of trees which masked a Belgian battery. The officer here, a tall, up-standing, gravely handsome young man, with a deep, strong, slightly humorous voice, and the air of one both born to and used to command—the best type of navy man—came over to meet us, rather glad, it seemed, to see someone. The ambulance officer had just started to speak when there was a

roar from the clump of trees, at the same instant an explosion directly overhead, and an ugly chunk of iron—a bit of broken casing from a shrapnel shell—plunged at our very feet. The shell had been wrongly timed and exploded prematurely.

“ I say ! ” the lieutenant called out to a Belgian officer standing not far away, “ can’t you telephone over to your people to stop that. That is the third time we’ve been nearly hit by their shrapnel this morning. After all ”—he turned to us with the air of apologising somewhat for his display of irritation—“ it’s quite annoying enough here without that, you know.”

It was indeed, annoying—very. The trenches were not under fire in the sense that the enemy were making a persistent effort to clear them out, but they were in the zone of fire, their range was known, and there was no telling when that distant boom thudded across the fields whether that particular shell might be intended for them or for somebody’s house in town. We could see in the distance their captive balloon, and there were a couple of scouts, the officer said, in a tower in the village, not much more than half a mile away. He pointed to the spot across the barbed wire. “ We’ve been trying to pick them off with our rifles for the last half hour.”

We left them engaged in this interesting distraction, the little rifle snaps in all that mighty thundering seeming only to accept the loneliness and helplessness of their position, and spun on down the transverse road, toward another trench on the left. The progress of the motor seemed slow and disappointing. Not that the spot a quarter of a mile off was at all less likely to be hit, yet one felt conscious of a

growing desire to be somewhere else. And though I took off my hat to keep it from blowing off, I found that every time a shell went over I promptly put it on again, indicating, one suspected, a decline in what the military experts call *morale*.

As we bowled down the road toward a group of brick houses on the left, a shell passed not more than fifty yards in front of us and through the side of one of these houses as easily as a circus rider pops through a tissue-paper hoop. Almost at the same instant another exploded—where I haven't the least idea, except that the dust from it hit us in the face. The motor rolled smoothly along meanwhile, and the Belgian soldier driving it stared as imperturbably ahead of him as if he were back at Antwerp on the seat of his taxicab.

You get used to shells in time, it seems, and, deciding that you either are or are not going to be hit, dismiss responsibility and leave it all to fate. I must admit that in my brief experience I was not able to arrive at this restful state. We reached at last the city gate through which we had left Antwerp and the motor came to a stop just at the inner edge of the passage under the fort, and I said good-bye to the young Englishman ere he started back for the trenches again.

"Well," he called after me as I started across the open space between the gate and the houses, a stone's throw away, "you've had an experience anyway."

I was just about to answer that undoubtedly I had when—"Tzee-ee-ee-er-r"—a shell just cleared the ramparts over our heads and disappeared in the side of a house directly in front of us with a roar and

a geyser of dust. Neither the motor nor a guest's duty now detained me, and, waving him good-bye, I turned at right angles and made with true civilian speed for the shelter of a side street.

The shells all appeared to be coming from a south-east direction, and in the lee of houses on the south side of the street one was reasonably protected. Keeping close to the house fronts and dodging—rather absurdly no doubt—into doorways when that wailing whistle came up from behind, I went zig-zagging through the deserted city toward the hotel on the other side of town.

It was such a progress as one might make in some fantastic nightmare—as the hero of some eerie piece of fiction about the Last Man in the World. Street after street, with doors locked, shutters closed, sandbags, mattresses, or little heaps of earth piled over cellar windows; streets in which the only sound was that of one's own feet, where the loneliness was made more lonely by some forgotten dog cringing against the closed door and barking nervously as one hurried past.

Here, where most of the shells had fallen the preceding night, nearly all the houses were empty. Yet occasionally one caught sight of faces peering up from basement windows or of some stubborn householder standing in his southern doorway staring into space. Once I passed a woman bound away from, instead of toward, the river with her big bundle; and once an open carriage with a family in it driving, with peculiarly Flemish composure, toward the quay; and as I hurried past the park, along the Avenue Van Dyck—where fresh craters made by exploding shells had been dug in the turf—the swans,

still floating on the little lake, placidly dipped their white necks under water as if it were a quiet morning in May.

Now and then, as the shell's wail swung over its long parabola, there came with the detonation, across the roofs, the rumble of falling masonry. Once I passed a house quietly burning, and on the pavement were lopped-off trees. The impartiality with which those far-off gunners distributed their attentions was disconcerting. Peering down one of the up-and-down streets before crossing it, as if a shell were an automobile which you might see and dodge, you would shoot across and, turning into a cozy little side street, think to yourself that here at least they had not come, and then promptly see, squarely in front, another of those craters blown down through the Belgian blocks.

Presently I found myself under the trees of the Boulevard Léopold, not far from the British hospital, and recalled that it was about time that promise was made good. It was time indeed, and help with lifting they needed very literally. The order had just come to leave the building, bringing the wounded and such equipment as they could pack into half a dozen motor busses, and retire—just where, I did not hear—in the direction of Ghent. As I entered the port-ecoghère two poor wrecks of war were being led out by their nurses—more men burned in the powder explosion at Waelhem, their seared faces and hands covered with oil and cotton just as they had been lifted from bed.

The phrase "whistle of shells" had taken on a new reality since midnight. Now one was to learn something of the meaning of those equally familiar

words, " they succeeded in saving their wounded although under heavy fire."

None of the wounded could walk, none dress himself; most of them in ordinary times would have lain where they were for weeks. There were fractured legs not yet set, men with faces half shot away, men half out of their heads, and all these had to be dressed somehow, covered up, crowded into or on top of the busses and started off through a city under bombardment toward open country, which might already be occupied by the enemy.\*

Bundles of uniforms, mud-stained, blood-stained, just as they had come from the trenches, were dumped out of the storeroom and distributed, hit or miss.

British " Tommies " went out as Belgians, Belgians in British khaki; the man whose broken leg I had lifted the day before we simply bundled in his bed blankets and set up in the corner of a bus. One healthy-looking Belgian boy, on whom I was trying to pull a pair of British trousers, seemed to have nothing at all the matter with him, until it presently appeared that he was speechless, and paralysed in both left arm and left leg. And while we were working, an English soldier shot through the jaw and throat sat on the edge of his bed, shaking with a hideous rattling cough.

The hospital was in a handsome stone building, in ordinary times a club, perhaps, or a school; a wide stone stairway led up the centre, and above it was a glass skylight. This central well would have been a charming place for a shell to drop into, and one did drop not more than fifty feet or so away, in or close to the rear court. A few yards down the avenue another shell hit a cornice and sent a ton or

so of masonry crashing down on the sidewalk. Under conditions like these the nurses kept running up and down that staircase during the endless hour or two in which the wounded were being dressed and carried on stretchers to the street. They stood by the busses making their men comfortable, and when the first busses were filled, they sat in the open street on top of them, patiently waiting, as calm and smiling as circus queens on their gilt chariots. The behaviour of the men in the trenches was cool enough, but they at least were fighting men and but taking the chance of war. These were civilian volunteers, they had not even trenches to shelter them, and it took a rather unforeseen and difficult sort of courage to leave that fairly safe masonry building and sit smiling and helpful on top of a motor bus during a wait of half an hour or so, any second of which might be one's last.

There was an American nurse, there, a tall, radiant girl, whom they called, and rightly, "Morning Glory," who had been introduced to me the day before because we both belonged to that curious foreign race of Americans. What her name was I haven't the least idea, and if we were to meet to-morrow, doubtless we should have to be carefully presented over again, but I remember calling out to her, "Good-bye, American girl!" as we passed in the hall during the last minute or two, and she said good-bye, and suddenly reached out and put her hand on my shoulder and added, "Good luck!" or "God bless you!" or something like that. And these seemed at the moment quite the usual things to do and say. The doctor in charge and the general's wife apologised for running away, as they called it, and the last I

saw of the latter was as she waved back to me from the top of a bus, with just that look of concern over the desperate ride they were beginning which a slightly preoccupied hostess casts over a dinner table about which are seated a number of oddly assorted guests.

The strange procession got away safely at last, and safely, too, so I was told later, across the river; but where they finally spent the night I never heard.

I hurried down the street and into the Rue Nerviens. It must have been about 4 o'clock by that time. The bright October morning had changed to a chill and dismal afternoon, and up the western sky in the direction of the river a vast curtain of greasy black smoke was rolling. The petrol tanks which stretched for half a mile or so along the Scheldt had been set afire. It looked at the moment as if the whole city might be going, but there was no time then to think of possibilities, and I slipped down the lee side of the street to the door with the Red Cross flag. The front of the hospital was shut tight. It took several pulls at the bell to bring anyone, and inside I found a Belgian family, who had left their own house for the thicker ceilings of the hospital, and the nuns back in the wards with their nervous men.

Their servants had left that morning; the three or four sisters in charge had to do all the cooking and housework as well as look after their patients, and now they were keeping calm and smiling to subdue as best they could the fears of the Belgian wounded, who were ready to jump out of bed, whatever their condition, rather than fall into the hands of the enemy. Each one had no doubt that if he were not murdered outright he would be taken to Germany and forced to fight in the east against the

Russians. Several, who knew very well what was going on outside, had been found by the nurses that morning out of bed and all ready to take to the street.

Lest they should hear that their comrades in the Boulevard Léopold had been moved, the lay sister—the English lady—and I withdrew to the operating room, closed the door, and in that curious retreat talked over the situation. No orders had come to leave; in fact, they had been told to stay. They did have a man now in the shape of the Belgian gentleman, and from the same source an able-bodied servant, but how long these would stay, where food was to be found in that desolate city, when the bombardment would cease, and what the Germans would do with them—well, it was not a pleasant situation for a handful of women. But it was not of themselves she was thinking, but of their wounded and of Belgium, and of what both had suffered already and of what might yet be in store. It was of that this frail little sister talked that hopeless afternoon, while the smoke in the west spread farther up the sky, and she would now and then pause in the middle of a syllable while a shell sang overhead, then take it up again.

Meanwhile the light was going, and before it became quite dark and my hotel deserted, perhaps, as the rest of Antwerp, it seemed best to be getting across town. I could not believe that the Germans could treat such a place and people with anything but consideration and told the little nurse so. She came to the edge of the glass-covered court, laughingly saying I had best run across it, and wondering where we, who had met twice now under such curious circumstances, would meet again.

Then she turned back to the ward—to wait with that roomful of more or less panicky men for the tramp of German soldiers and the knock on the door which meant that they were prisoners.

Hurrying across town, I passed not far from the Hotel St. Antoine, a blazing four-storey building, nearly burned out now, and, like the other Antwerp fires, not spreading beyond its four walls. The cathedral was not touched, and indeed, in spite of the noise and terror, the material damage was comparatively slight. Soldiers were clearing the quay and setting a guard directly in front of our hotel—one of the few places in Antwerp that night where one could get so much as a crust of bread—and behind drawn curtains as usual we made 'what cheer we could. There were two American photographers and a correspondent who had spent the night before in the cellar of a house, the upper storey of which had been wrecked by a shell; a British intelligence officer, with the most bewildering way of hopping back and forth between a brown civilian suit and a spick-and-span new uniform; and several Belgian families hoping to get a boat downstream in the morning.

We sat round the great fire in the hall, above which the architect, building for happier times, had had the bad grace to place a skylight; and discussed the time and means of getting away. The intelligence officer, not wishing to be made a prisoner, was for getting a boat of some sort at the first crack of dawn, and the photographers, who had had the roof blown off over their heads, heartily agreed with him. I did not like to leave without at least a glimpse of those spiked helmets nor to desert my friends in the Rue Nerviens, and yet there was the likelihood, if one

remained, of being marooned indefinitely in the midst of the conquering army.

Meanwhile the flight of shells continued, a dozen or more fires could be seen from the upper windows of the hotel, and billows of red flame from the burning petrol tanks rolled up the southern sky. It had been what might be called a rather full day, and the wail of approaching projectiles began to get a bit on one's nerves. One started at the slamming of a door, took every dull thump for a distant explosion, and when we finally turned in I carried the mattress from my room, which faced the south, over the other side of the building and laid it on the floor beside another man's bed. Before a shell could reach me it would have to traverse at least three partitions and possibly him as well.

After midnight the bombardment quieted, but shells continued to visit us from time to time all night. All night the Belgians were retreating across the pontoon bridge, and once—it must have been about 2 or 3 o'clock—I heard a sound which meant that all was over. It was the crisp tramp—different from the Belgian shuffle—of British soldiers, and up from the street came an English voice, "Best foot forward, boys!" and a little farther on, "Look alive, men; they've just picked up our range!"

I went to the window and watched them tramp by—the same men we had seen that morning. The petrol fire was still flaming across the south, a steamer of some sort was burning at her wharf beside the bridge—Napoleon's veterans retreating from Moscow could scarcely have left behind a more complete picture of war than did those young recruits.

Morning came dragging up out of that dreadful night, smoky, damp, and chill. It was almost a London fog that lay over the abandoned town. I had just packed up and was walking through one of the upper halls when there was a crash that shook the whole building, the sound of falling glass, and out in the river a geyser of water shot up, timbers and boards flew from the bridge, and there were dozens of smaller splashes as if from a shower of shot. I thought that the hotel was hit at last, and that the Germans, having let civilians escape over the bridge, were turning everything loose, determined to make an end of the business. It was, as a matter of fact, the Belgians blowing up the bridge to cover their retreat. In any case it seemed useless to stay longer, and within an hour, on a tug jammed with the last refugees, we were starting downstream.

Behind us, up the river, a vast curtain of lead-coloured smoke from the petrol tanks had climbed up the sky and spread out mushroom-wise, as smoke and ashes sometimes spread out from a volcano. This smoke, merging with the fog and the smoke from the Antwerp fires, seemed to cover the whole sky. And under that sullen mantle the dark flames of the petrol still glowed; to the left was the blazing skeleton of the ship, and on the right Antwerp itself, the rich, old, beautiful, comfortable city, all but hidden, and now and then sending forth the boom of an exploding shell like a groan.

A large empty German steamer, the *Gneisenau*, marooned here since the war, came swinging slowly out into the river, pushed by two or three nervous little tugs—to be sunk there, apparently, in mid-stream. From the pontoon bridge which stubbornly

refused to yield, came explosion after explosion, and up and down the river fires sprung up, and there were other explosions, as the crushed Belgians, in a sort of rage of devastation, became their own destroyers.

By following the adventures of one individual I have endeavoured to suggest what the bombardment of a modern city was like—what you might expect if an invading army came to-morrow to New York or Chicago or San Francisco. I have only coasted along the edges of Belgium's tragedy, and the rest of the story, of which we were a part for the next two days—the flight of those hundreds of thousands of homeless people—is something that can scarcely be told—you must follow it out in imagination into its countless uprooted, disorganised lives. You must imagine old people struggling alone over miles and miles of country roads; young girls, under burdens a man might not care to bear, tramping until they had to carry their shoes in their hands and go barefoot to rest their unaccustomed feet. You must imagine the pathetic efforts of hundreds of people to keep clean by washing in wayside streams or ditches; imagine babies going without milk because there was no milk to be had; families shivering in damp hedgerows or against haystacks where darkness overtook them; and you must imagine this not on one road, but on every road, for mile after mile over a whole countryside. What was to become of these people when their little supply of food was exhausted? Where could they go? Even if back to their homes, it would be but to lift their hats to their conquerors, never to know but that the next week or month would sweep the tide of war back over them again.

Never in modern times, not in our generation at least, has the world seen anything like that flight—nothing so strange, so overwhelming, so pitiful. And when I say pitiful, you must not think of hysterical women, desperate, trampling men, tears and screams. In all those miles one saw neither complaining nor protestation—at times one might almost have thought it some vast eccentric picnic. No, it was their orderliness, their thrift and kindness, their unmistakable usefulness, which made the waste and irony of it all so colossal and hideous. Each family had its big round loaves of bread and its pile of hay for the horses, the bags of pears and potatoes, the children had their little dolls, and you would see some tired mother with her big bundle under one arm and some fluffy little puppy in the other, you could not associate them with forty-centimetre shells or burned churches and libraries or anything but quiet homes and peaceable, helpful lives. You could not be swept along by that endless stream of exiles and retain at the end of the day any particular enthusiasm for the red glory of war. And when we crossed the Dutch border that afternoon and came on a village street full of Belgian soldiers cut off and forced to cross the line, to be interned here, presumably until the war was over, one could not mourn very deeply their lost chances of martial glory as they unslung their rifles and turned them over to the good-natured Dutch guard. They had held back that avalanche long enough, these Belgians, and one felt as one would to see lost children get home again or some one dragged from under the wheels.

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